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MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

THE SONGS

OF AN

EGYPTIAN PEASANT

COLLECTED AND TRANSLATED

INTO GERMAN BY

HEINRICH SCHAEFER

ENGLISH EDITION BY

FRANCES HART BREASTED

LEIPZIG
J. C. HINRICHS
1904

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Photograph by the author.

محمود محمد العتر

Maḥmûd Moḥammed el-'Itr
Watchman of the Administration of Antiquities in the Desert of Saqqāra.

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Egypt of Dress, Manners, Superstitions

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000

DEDICATED TO MY

DEAR WIFE

[p. v]

H. S.

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000

He who looks at every feather,
Ne'er will get his bed together.

Wer auf jede Feder acht',
Nie das Bette fertig macht.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The little collection which I herewith publish, doubtless makes known for the first time, a considerable series of songs of the peasants of Upper Egypt; for, as far as I know, there has, hitherto, been printed here and there, only an occasional song, for the most part of no particular content.

Although I hope that my book may also furnish material scientifically available, yet this has not been the motive for its publication. It is not intended as a book for scholars. I trust its perusal may be a pleasure to all travelers on the Nile, and to those who may be preparing themselves for the journey thither, as well as to any others who, upon their return home, would gladly be again reminded of the country and the people. Moreover, it may, perhaps, help all such to learn somewhat better how our brown friends think and feel, than it is possible to do by the mere reading of descriptions. For here the people themselves speak, and in words which were not calculated for their effect upon Europeans. Indeed, I think many will be pleasantly surprised by these songs. Of course they are of unequal merit, but I

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114 think that among these unpretentious verses are some, which will give others as much pleasure as they did me.[1]

I wrote down the collection in the winter of 1900—1901, during the excavations of the Berlin Museum at the sun-temple of the old king, Ne-user-Rē, at Abūṣîr. (The ruin is called by the people: Abu Gūrâb.) In spite of this, not one of my informants was a Būṣîri (man of Abūṣîr), but the entire collection of songs comes from Sa"āris[2] (Saqqāries), inhabitants of Sa"āra (Saqqāra), familiar to all travelers. The nucleus, some forty, I obtained from our black Abu Bekr Ibrāhîm es-Sūdâni, a bright, half-grown lad, whose family for several generations, had lived in Egypt. The remainder, with but few exceptions, were contributed by our old 124 rafîr (watchman), Maḥmûd Moḥammed el-'Itr. All 115 the other songs also, were rewritten at his dictation, so that all these printed texts give his pronunciation, which was very beautiful and clear. The old man was indefatigable; every day he came with a new song. "Write! — A new one has flown into my head", were usually his words. When the text was

[1]) A few songs from this collection have already been printed in Arbeit und Rythmus, by K. Buecher (Leipzig, Teubner 1902), and in No. 14 of the Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft.

[2]) The Arabic letter qāf, which in this vicinity is either [104] not pronounced at all, or is spoken like a sharp hiātus, [194] I designate with: '. I found this pronunciation as far as Ehnasye near Beni-Suēf.

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once fixed, he would patiently repeat it four or five times for correction, and proved himself an excellent commentator, in spite of some misconceptions, which, undoubtedly, may have slipped in. He could neither read nor write, which fact I think was, for my purpose, very fortunate; and I was glad, also, that he knew no other language than his own. It is a pleasure to recall the time, when I spent the greater part of my leisure moments, squatting before the low, reed-covered watchman's-hut, built of the stones from the debris of the excavations, while I looked into the alert face of the one-eyed, old man, and talked with him. I wrote down the songs at once in the transliteration. Only in the case of doubtful words, in order to make certain of the consonants, did I employ a scribe to take down the Arabic at Maḥmûds dictation.[1] I hope, therefore, to be able to offer a comparatively reliable Arabic text. Maḥmûd declared decidedly several times, that none of the songs was composed by himself. The title of my book, therefore, must not be misunderstood; it is intended only to state, that it presents the entire fund of songs which Maḥmûd knew. They are songs which are

[1]) It is a veritable cross, that the uneducated scribes, who never pronounce the qāf, either do not write it at all, or indicate it by the alif. Because of this, many words are disfigured beyond recognition. It was a great help to me, to have among our workmen, several from Quft in Upper Egypt, who pronounce the qāf like hard g. In doubtful cases I had them repeat the words in question, and could thus determine the lacking qāfs.

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114 really sung by the people. I was able to prove this in many cases by casually questioning others. It is certain that the majority of these songs did not originate in our day. Some of them can be proven to have been sung just as they are, fifty or sixty years ago.

533 The life of the Egyptian peasant (singular: fellāḥ, 1467 plural: fellāḥîn), made up of hard work and few pleasures, is more monotonous than that of most peoples. Any great wealth in the material is, therefore, hardly to be expected; and besides this, my collection is small. Nevertheless, it touches all the essential aspects of peasant life. We find children at play and with their mother; lads at the work of excavation; girls drawing water; men at the plow, shāduf and sā'ye (sāqye); the sailor and the vegetable-vender; the watchman guarding the antiquities; and much more.

The most diverse tones are struck; a soft, often fervent piety in the half-religious songs, and in the midst of them the roguish song about sacred Mecca; sharp scorn in the scolding songs and excellent humor in the self-rallying of the poor peasant-lad. Pleasures of the feast; the pilgrimage to Mecca; prison and death are made subjects of song. Even in the sphere of love-songs, which, in modern Egypto-Arabic poetry are usually rather monotonous, there is great variety of treatment shown. To be sure, there are not lacking, the sentimental and often tearful descriptions of love-sickness, which, in the Egyptian mind, are inseparable from the lover; nevertheless

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it is just in the love-songs that we find a certain freshness and vividness. If the character as a whole were not to be misrepresented, then we could not omit from the collection, those songs which, for our feeling, are rather too strongly natural in expression.[1] Prudishness seemed to me, in this case, to deserve little consideration. I have, however, been obliged to withhold about a dozen of them. 533 [114]

The songs all have their melodies, although they are not always pleasing to our ear, because of their limitation to a few tones, and of being sung in a peculiar, nasal voice; nevertheless, the Egyptians pride themselves on their singing, and consider themselves a very musical people.[2] Even if I had heard all the songs sung, it would have been of very little use to me, for, being quite unmusical, I would not have been able either to write them down or to confide them to memory. I must leave it to others to remedy this; it would certainly be worth while. When the boys sang at the work of excavating, as they were usually inclined to do, they [186] 461 533

[1]) According to Maḥmûds testimony, the most outspoken of these are sung by old women, who are paid to entertain the guests at family celebrations. In a village there are three or four such women. [887]

[2]) That this claim is recognized outside of their own land, as justifiable, Wetzstein shows, in his remark, that in Damascus, Egyptians are chosen by preference, for street-criers (especially as musebbil) on account of their artistic singing. (Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft, XI p. 513.)

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461 kept strict time, accenting the beats, which, just as
533 in ancient times, were, besides, often marked by clapping the hands and stamping the feet. The songs of the boys, who, 4500 years ago were occupied in building our temple of the sun, will not have sounded very differently.

114 Although I collected the songs at Sa"āra (Saq-
171 qāra), it is, of course, not to be inferred, that they
[121] all originated there, or that they are not sung elsewhere. In some cases it could be determined, that knowledge of them extended to Cairo and even to the sea between Egypt and Palestine. It is worthy of note, that several songs which others endeavored to contribute, were refused by Maḥmûd with the words: "No, those are not peasant songs." It will be very interesting to determine the geographical range of the songs, when once collections of songs from other places have been published, with exact indications of their provenience.[1] As they are songs in the Arabic language, there will be evident similarities with Arabic songs from countries outside of Egypt, in spite of their being quite distinct in general character from the non-Egyptian songs with which
114 I am acquainted. The only time which I had at my disposal for writing down the songs, were the few free hours which the work of excavation, with

[1]) F. Kern informs me, that some of the songs, with variations, are contained in the collection: Qaṭâif el-laṭâif, printed in Cairo. In the detailed treatment which he is preparing, he will follow the occurrence of our songs in vulgar Arabic texts both printed and manuscript.

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its manifold cares, allowed me.[1] Moreover, I am entirely without previous training as an Arabist, since all that I know of the language, was learned during my two years' sojourn in Egypt, when the study of Arabic was merely an incidental matter. I am, therefore, greatly indebted to Professor Dr. A. Fischer, of Leipzig, for going to the trouble of looking through my "layman's-translations" and freeing them from a number of mistakes, both great and small. That the work, nevertheless, contains various mistakes, is due to the circumstances already mentioned, and we are both fully aware of them. What may be said of the songs from the standpoint of the Arabist, will be elsewhere stated by Professor Fischer[2], when he will also indicate where he does not agree with the translations and explanations which I have adopted. 114

I could almost wish that a good deal of fault may be found with my work, if it might prove true the German proverb: "Dass man der Dornen acht', das haben die Rosen gemacht." In Lane's classical book[3] we have a most excellent description of the life and customs of the inhabitants of Cairo. The treatment of the conditions in Upper Egypt is lim-

[1]) In No. 14 of the Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, L. Borchardt gives a vivid description of a working-day.

[2]) For lesser contributions I am indebted to L. Borchardt as well as Professor Dr. Lippert.

[3]) An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians. (London 1836; 1882; herein cited from the old edition.) [113]

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114 ited to a few pages, and yet it is just these which are vastly more important to us Egyptologists, for the history of culture. But the work of a layman's leisure hours can not produce a supplement to Lane.

Some young, efficient Arabist, with open eyes and a fondness for the land and inhabitants, and possessed of sufficient knowledge of Ancient Egypt and the Coptic language, ought to bury himself for two or three years, in an Upper Egyptian village. I am convinced that this sacrifice would be richly repaid in regard to the Arabic language also. It can not be accomplished by mere visits during the season.[1]

Up to this time next to nothing has been done in this direction[2], and who knows when it may be too late?

It would please me most of all, if my book should prove an incentive for the production of a better one, which would form a companion-piece to G. Dalman's excellent "Palaestinischer Diwan" (Leipzig, Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1901).

Heinrich Schaefer.

Steglitz, June 13, 1902.

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[181] [1]) The Egyptians are much more unapproachable and reserved in many things than is apparent from slight contact.

[113] [2]) Klunzinger's splendid book: "Bilder aus Ober-Aegypten etc." (Stuttgart, 1877.) gives a great deal, but not all, by far, of the wealth of material.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In the preparation of the English edition of these songs, the translator has received from Professor Schaefer, a number of verbal remarks furnished by Dr. F. Kern; others from reviews by A. Nallino (Litterarisches Centralblatt); B. Meissner (Deutsche Litteraturzeitung 1904 p. 1493) and especially by K. Vollers (Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft LVIII, p. 226), thus making possible many improvements upon the German edition. The author has also himself furnished numerous additional remarks and notes. The entire work of producing the English edition has been done under the most advantageous circumstances; constant consultation with the author, and frequent discussions of doubtful points have ensured much greater accuracy than would otherwise have been possible.

The English version of the songs is not merely a translation from the German; wherever necessary, the Arabic was consulted, and for this aid, besides the author, I am indebted to my husband, who also gave the translation a careful revision.

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[194] The reader should note that all the vowels in the transliteration have the sounds of Italian or continental vowels.

[192] The word, fellāḥ, which has been translated: "peasant", means literally: plowman.

For the sake of preserving the play on words, so characteristic of the Arabic, it has sometimes been necessary to translate literally, where, in order to be perfectly intelligible, a foot-note was essential. (Numbers 34—35, "finished".)

Owing to the differences in our occidental, living arrangements, it has been difficult, in some instances, to preserve the comparisons which are more easily rendered in the German.

The task herewith completed, has given me unusual pleasure, since it has acquainted me with many things in the life of the people, which, during a winter in Egypt, entirely escaped me. I can only hope that the translation may render the same service to travelers in Egypt, as well as to all lovers of folk-lore.

Frances Hart Breasted.

Gross Lichterfelde, July 18, 1904.

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1.

Morning Hymn.

539× [461]

This little hymn was sung very often by our boys, — always in the morning, during the first hours of work.

U-ṣabaḥna ʾaṣdīn Alla,
ʿala bābak, ya kerīm, yalla,
ʿala bāb min fataḥ abwābak.
Wa-la ḥaul wa-la ʾūwa illa-bak.

In the morning we turn to Allah.
At thy door (we stand), thou gracious one, Allah,
At the door of him, who hath opened thy doors of mercy.
And there is no might and no strength save in thee.

3. The Prophet Mohammed has opened to mortals the doors to Allah. [779] [796]

4. A frequently used formula, founded on a Koran verse.

2.

Trust in Allah.

339

Ya ʿēni, wel-miʿēn Alla
wes-Seiyide u-rigal Alla;
we-ramēt el-ḥiml ʿalēk, yalla.

Thou, mine eye, Allah is the helper
And the Lady and the men of Allah;
And on thee have I cast the burden, O Allah!

[192] 1. "Mine eye" is a frequent term of affection, equivalent to "my darling". Here, perhaps, the father is speaking to the son.

2. The "Lady" is the lady Zēnab, the Prophet's granddaughter, whose greatly esteemed mosque lies in south Cairo.
[192] The "men of Allah" are the saints (shēkhs), whose graves lie scattered throughout the land.

3.

Exhortation to Prayer.

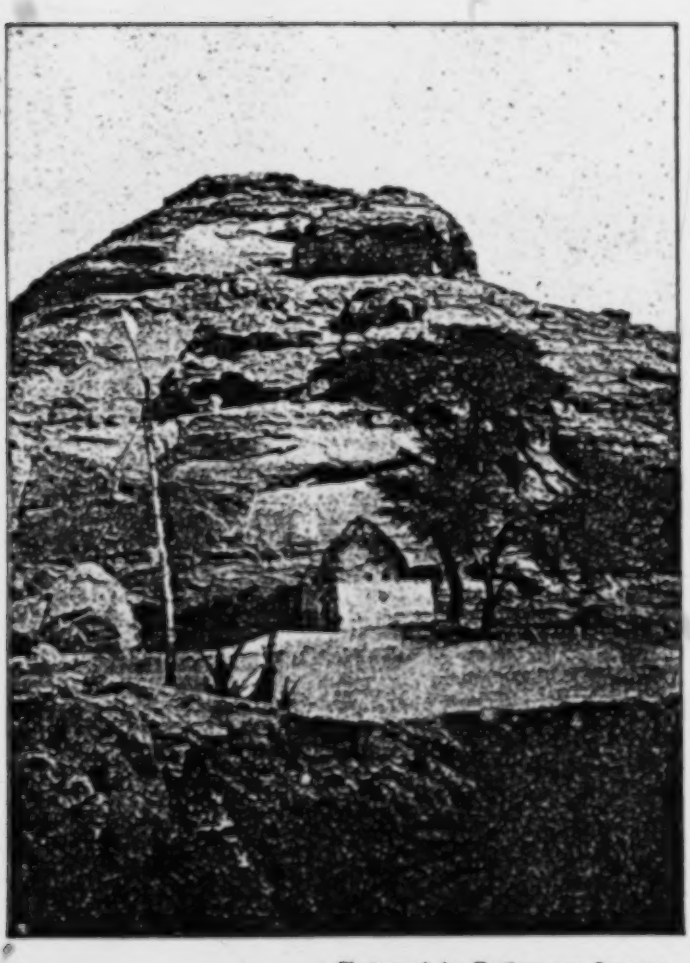
[182] *Ya ʾalbi, ṣalli wimdaḥ Moḥammed*
illi ṣalāto manaʿit guhannim.

Pray, my heart, and praise Moḥammed,
Whose prayer has put away hell.

1. From pious Moslems.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

133
346
766



Photograph by Freiherr von Gruenau.

Grave of a Saint.
(at Ellesiye in Nubia.)

[P. 3]

4.

Sing ye to the Prophet!

539x
782

The children exhort each other, even when at work on the excavations in the desert, not to forget Moḥammed, the messenger of Allaḥ, the intercessor for mankind, but to praise him with songs, such as our numbers 5—7. (Maḥmûd called such a song "ṛuna nabawi"). Otherwise, neglect of this, brings a most terrible revenge upon the entire family.

The refrain "O Moḥammed" is sometimes used as a mere interjection, for the sake of meter; again it is a part of the sentence.

Ya-Mḥammed,
ya wallahi, ya-Mḥammed,
yabn-er-Rāma, ya-Mḥammed,
ya medallil bil-ṛamāme, ya-Mḥammed!
Lāli lāli ya-Mḥammed
fil-gabāli, ya-Mḥammed;
wil-leiētu ya-Mḥammed,
ruḥtu u-gētu, ya-Mḥammed;
welli ma ye'ūl ya-Mḥammed,
yiṣbaḥ ma'tūl, ya-Mḥammed,
fi dire-l-fūl, ya-Mḥammed,
hāwa we-ummo wimrāt 'ammo, ya-Mḥammed!

O Moḥammed,
By Allah, O Moḥammed,
Son of Rāma, O Moḥammed,
Who was shaded by the cloud, O Moḥammed!
Sing, sing: "O Moḥammed!"
In the desert! [— O Moḥammed].

5

[P.4 is blank]

×539 And when ye sing: "O Moḥammed!",
782 Go ye and come ye [— O Moḥammed].
But whoever fails to say: "O Moḥammed!",
Will lie, some morning, slain [— O Moḥammed],
In the bean-field, [— O Moḥammed].
He and his mother and the wife of his uncle!
[O Moḥammed].

1—4. Invocation of the Prophet Moḥammed.

2. "By Allah" is used to confirm the truth of what follows in the song.

[792] 3. Rāma is, according to Maḥmûd, a name of the mother of the Prophet.

5. Addressed to companions.

[92] [776] 8. "Go ye and come ye" is, of course, to be completed with: bis-salāme, "in safety". The road to the excavations is often long and the peasant-boy's imagination pictures ḥarāmiye (thieves) and 'afārit (evil spirits) lurking about everywhere. There is, in Cairo, a proverb, which runs: kullē ḫarâbe welina fiha 'afrit, "In every ruined house there lurks for us an evil spirit." In order to understand this proverb, it is necessary to remember, that in the native quarters of oriental cities, half or totally ruined houses are a much more frequent sight than with us. Moreover, Abu Gûrâb (the ruin of the sun-temple, see page II) before our excavations, was regarded as full of evil spirits.

[362] [72]

[241] [262] 11. In the spring, wide stretches of land are covered with the tall fûl plant or hog's bean. In Egypt this bean is an important element in the nourishment of man and beast. Compare No. 14, l. 2.

12. He involves with him in his ruin, even his dearest relatives.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

5.

539x
782

Prayer to the Prophet.

Ya nabīne, ya sākin Ṭēbe,
u-ʿalēk, ya nabīne, u-ṣallēne.
Yōm el-ʾiyāme išfaʿ fīne,
wiššaffaʿ, ya rasūl Alla,
nuṣṣ el-layāli we-ḥakam Alla.

O our Prophet, who dwellest in Ṭēbe,
For thee, O our Prophet, we entreat Allah's blessing.
At the Day of Resurrection speak for us,
And mediate for us, thou messenger of Allah,
At midnight — but Allah's will be done.

1. Ṭēbe is another name for the city of Medīna, in which the Prophet Moḥammed lies buried. [779]

2. That is: "we say: Allah bless Moḥammed and save him".

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

6.

×539 782

Praise of the Prophet.

This song was a special favorite of our boys and was often sung:

"All nature, animate and inanimate, rendered its homage to the Prophet." Evidently Maḥmûd understood the song not solely as something that happened in time long past, when the Prophet still walked on earth. He wished the camel, mentioned in l. 5, to be understood as the one which carries the Maḥmal[1] each year from Cairo to Mecca and back. This interpretation certainly is false and artificial, but it indicates, that Maḥmûd thought not only of the distant past: each nod [824] of the wind-bowed palms and the opening of every rosebud is, even to this day, a greeting for the Prophet.

Ya ʿēni, weṣ-ṣala ʿan-nabi,
we-ṣalāt en-nabi maksabi.
Mitwaḥḥid rabbak, ya ṣabi.
Wen-naḫle sagadit lin-nabi,
wel-gamal ḥām lin-nabi,
wil-ḥagar lān lin-nabi,
wil-ward fattaḥ lin-nabi,
wel-ḥaṣa sabbaḥ le-rabbo:
kullo kerāme lin-nabi.

Thou, mine eye, Allah's blessing be upon the Prophet!
And the prayer of the Prophet shall be my gain.
Thy Lord is an only one — O boy.
The palm-tree bowed before the Prophet,
And the camel ran about searching for the Prophet,

[1]) Regarding Maḥmal see Lane II p. 182.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

And the stone was soft for the Prophet, 539*
And the roses unfolded for the Prophet, 782
And the pebbles praised God, their Lord:
"All in honor of the Prophet"!

1. "Mine eye" = "My darling"; compare No. 2. Here it is resumed by "boy" in l. 3.

2. The Prophet is the intercessor of man before God, and as such rewards the pious who invoke God's blessing upon him. Compare the same line of thought in No. 8. [776]

3. "The Lord thy God is one God."

4. The pebbles which cover the surface of the desert say: subḥān Allāh, "(I praise) the perfection of God."

7.

The Prophet in the Rose-Garden.

Moḥammed dāḫil eg-genēne
wel-wardē ḍallil ʿalē.
Be-ṭarfē šālo el-ʾaṣab,
farado we-ṣalla ʿalē.

Moḥammed entered the garden,
And the roses shaded him.
The edge of his shawl was embroidered in gold.
He spread it and prayed upon it.

2. A love-song of Upper Egypt (Qene?), of which Klunzinger (p. 110) gives a translation, begins thus: "I entered the garden and the roses shaded me".

3. The shawl, which is worn wound about the head, as a turban, often serves as a prayer-rug. No Moslem at prayer would touch the bare earth. He prays upon a little rug, designed for the purpose; upon his cloak, or, as in this case, upon the shawl of his turban. [291]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

To the Saint of Ṭanṭa.

8.

× 539
776
796
[769]

Es-Seiyid (Master or literally the Master) Aḥmed el-Bedawi is the celebrated saint, whose grave lies in the city of Ṭanṭa in the Delta (compare No. 39). On his birthday (Mûlid), which is celebrated yearly by high masses, a flood of visitors from afar, is drawn hither. In the festal decorations at this time, as on all other such occasions in Egypt, little lamps take a prominent place beside the gay pennants. Ll. 3—4 describe [211] the building covering the tomb of the saint.

Ya Seiyid, yalla ya Seiyid!
Ya bâb in-nabi, ya Seiyid,
Yabu ʿatabe ḥaḍra, ya Seiyid,
Yabu ḍabbe faḍḍa, ya Seiyid,
Yabu bâb mezauwa', ya Seiyid!
Win ʿišt ana lagī-lak, ya Seiyid,
wa'id ʾanadîlak, ya Seiyid!

O Seiyid, on! Seiyid!
Thou door to the Prophet, O Seiyid,
Thou, with the green threshold, O Seiyid,
Thou, with the silver latch, O Seiyid,
Thou, with the gay-colored door, O Seiyid!
And if I live, I shall come to thee, O Seiyid,
And light thy lamps, O Seiyid!

1. The saint is mediator between mankind and the Prophet, as the latter is between mankind and God; compare No. 1, l. 1.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

9. 539x 776

A song of Egyptian origin, containing in part the same verses as our own, was communicated to Dalman (Palaestinischer Diwan, p. 141) in Sidon, by a sailor. Of the first verse he remarks: The flag-staff with the crescent, which is mounted over the tomb, is supposed to sway, as a sign that the saint promises to grant the request made to him. [787]

Hizz el-hilāl, ya Seiyid,
yabu bēra' nabawi!
Win 'išt ana, ya Seiyid,
lazūrak sanawi.

Shake the crescent, O Seiyid,
Thou, with the Prophet's flag!
And if I live, O Seiyid,
I shall visit thee yearly.

2. The flag of the Prophet is green, as are the turbans and sometimes even the clothes, of his descendants in Egypt (the Sherifs). [292]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

10.

The Well Zemzem.

K 539
778
823

The well Zemzem is the miraculous well in the Mosque of Mekka. Pilgrims drink from it and are accustomed to carry vials of its water home with them. In a very similar song of Dalman's (P. 8; from Ḥawāra in Aglûn in Palestine) the Zemzem well is addressed, but it means a girl. Perhaps our song is also to be thus understood.

Ya bīrî Zemzem, salabik selāsil,
weš-šurbê minnik dawa lim-mesāfir.
Ya bīrî Zemzem salabik ḥarīr,
weš-šurbê minnik dawa lil-ʿalīl.

Thou Zemzem well, thy ropes are like chains,
And to drink from thee is medicine for the traveler.
Thou Zemzem well, thy ropes are like silk,
[757] And to drink from thee is medecine for the sick.

1. 3. This is a draught-well. Its ropes are as strong as chains and as soft as silk.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

11.

The Straggler.

539x
788

The pilgrimage to Mecca, which every pious Moslem is bound to make at least once in his life, is a long one; it goes by land and by sea, and for people unaccustomed to travel, it is attended with many cares and dangers. For this reason the pilgrims usually combine into caravans of some size. The little song pictures the perplexity of a straggler, who has missed connection with his caravan and is now totally at a loss. [484]

Lines 1—2 are the words of another, who calls to the pilgrim: "Enough for to-day, for thou canst not possibly reach thy goal to-day!" Lines 3—7 are spoken by the pilgrim.

Sams el-'aṣāri ṛarabit,
yalli biladak bu'ad!
Wana biladi Mikketi!
u-min ēn arūḥ?
u-min ēn âgi?
u-min ēn asaiyir markabi
u-min ēn azūrak, ya nabi?

"The afternoon sun has gone down,
Thou, whose country is afar off!" —
"O, the land I would go to is Mecca!
How shall I go?
How shall I reach my goal?
And how shall I sail my ship?
How shall I visit thee, O Prophet?"

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

12.

×539 **The Transitoriness of Earthly Riches.**

To a once-rich but now impoverished beauty. God alone is eternal; earthly glory passes away.

Alla wed-dāim Alla,
Alla we-la dāim ṣēro.
Bēḍa u-fēn 'abīdik?
Matu wel-mulkĕ lalla!

Allah, and the Eternal One is Allah,
Allah, and there is nothing eternal beside him.
Thou white maiden, where are thy black slaves?
They are dead, and the kingdom is Allah's!

13.

The Sigh of the Debtor.

[776] Abul'éle el-Ḥosēni is the saint, whose tomb lies in Būlâ' (Bulak), the suburb of Cairo.

Yabu-l-'éle, ya Ḥosēni,
Yabu-l-'éle, tūfi dēni!

O Abul'éle, O Ḥosēni,
O Abul'éle, pay my debts!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

14.

Treasures.

539x

The children are not alone objects of care to their parents, but are also their dearest treasures. [858]

A little urchin speaks to his elder brother:

Ya ḫāi, ḫudni fi-gēbak,
'arnē fūl aḫḍar.
Leḥne 'izāze,
we-leḥne bēḍa nikkassar.
Deḥne ḫawātim dahab
niṯaṭṭē fil-ḫanṣar.

O brother, put me in thy pocket,
Like a fresh bean-pod.
We are not like glass,
Nor like fragile eggs,
But rather, we are gold rings,
To be worn on the little finger.

1. Properly speaking, the peasant has not a pocket, but a pouch on his breast, formed by belting in his garment. [291]

2. The fresh young pods of the fūl (hog's bean) are regarded by the children as a great dainty. Compare No. 4, note on l. 11. [262]

3. A ring is about the only ornament of the fellāḥ, but he is fond of having it seen. [301]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

15.

*539
825

The Baby Gazelle.

The gazelle is for the Arab, the prototype of tenderness and beauty. Its pasture is the stony desert ground. Who is not reminded of:

"Shoe the horse and shoe the mare,
But let the little colt go bare!"

Gidy-il-ṛazal, ya aulad,
sāriḥ wara-mmato,
sāriḥ bala markūb,
ḥefyit rigalāto.

The baby gazelle, my children,
Goes behind its mother, to the pasture;
It goes to the pasture without any shoes,
With little feet bare.

8:Schaefer A-8 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Rain-Songs.

16.

539×
821

In spite of the overflowing of the Nile, rain is regarded by the Egyptian peasant, as a most desirable aid; and especially so, of course, in bad years.

Ya rabbē tišti,
we-billē bišti;
wel-'amḥ yirḫaṣ
we-amla kirši.

O Lord, let it rain,
Wet my little dress!
So that corn will be cheaper,
And I can fill my belly!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

17.

*539
821 "Rain, pour it out", that is, all the water which you can give, so that all the vessels in the house will overflow, even
[551] to the coffee-cups. Both personal names ('Abdulle and 'Abd-el-'Âl) are taken, of course, only to rhyme with the names of the vessels. It is certainly mere accident, that the name 'Abdalla appears also in a similar rain-song of Dalman's (P. 175; from Aleppo).

Ya naṭaret 'Abdulle,
ṣubbîha wimla-l-'ulle.
Ya naṭaret 'Abd-el-'âl,
ṣubbîha wimla-l-fingâl.

O Rain of 'Abdulle,
Pour it out and fill the water-bottle!
O Rain of 'Abd-el-'Âl,
Pour it out and fill the cup.

[415] 2. 'ulle are the water-bottles, of porous, unglazed clay, in which the drinking-water is kept fresh.

4. Fingâl (fingân) are the little coffee-cups without handles, which are placed in little stands (zarf) resembling egg-cups.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

18.

539x 854

One of the songs with which the mothers quiet the little ones, and in which one often seeks in vain for the connection. This song, with a few variations, was heard by Goldziher in Cairo in 1873. (Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft 33, p. 612.)

Ya naṭara, ṣubbīha,
ḥalli-l-wizz yeʿūm fīha.
Bint uḫti ʾarʿa ʾarʿa,
ḥadha-d-dīb u-rāḥ yirʿa,
ʾarʿaša taḥt et-tirʿa.

O Rain, pour it out!
Let the geese go swimming in it!
My little niece is scab-headed, scab-headed, [164]
The wolf has caught her and gone to eating,
He has gnawed her to pieces in the canal.

1. Compare No. 17, l. 2.

2. Let it rain hard enough to form puddles, in which geese can swim.

3. Owing to the filth in which the country children grow up, scabby heads are not rare. [515]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

19.

Song to a sun-shower.

'Ēb 'alēk, ya naṭare,
wes-sams mefattaḥe.

Shame yourself, O rain,
For the sun has broken through!

2. Literally: "has opened". The same word is used with flowers which are unfolding, e. g. No. 6, l. 7.

20.

Preparations for a Feast.

Faṭne (Fatme), the daughter of the Prophet Mohammed, and her husband 'Ali, are represented in the song as simple Egyptian peasants. She is about to bake cakes for the feast; first hastily cleaning the house and carrying the basket of sweepings out upon her head. Everyone who is acquainted with Egyptian villages, will have often seen this picture.

'Ali, the master of the house, to please his wife, has gone as far as southern Upper Egypt, for the sake of an iron hook, for taking bread from the oven. At the beginning, the sun, which has hidden behind the clouds, is requested to show its pleasantest face at the feast; for there is not continuous blue sky in northern Upper Egypt. At Saqqāra, in winter, we often had an overcast sky and heavy rainfalls.

Fattaḥi, ya semṣe, ya semṣe,
lagl 'Ali u-Moḥammadī
we-Faṭne, bint en-nabi!
u-'aginha 'uddāmha.

539x
527
821

Rāḥet tekubbē-trabha
we-zaḥferān fī-kmamha.
we-gōzha rāḥ eṣ-ṣa'īd
yegīb-liha baškūr ḥadīd,
tiḥbiz-bo kaḥk el-'īd, kaḥk el-'īd.

Come out again, O sun, dear sun,
For 'Ali's and Moḥammed's sakes
And Fatne's, daughter of the Prophet!
Her dough stands there before her.
She went to empty out her dust;
Saffron colored were her sleeves.
Her goodman has gone to the Ṣa'īd,
To fetch for her an iron hook,
That she may bake with it the cakes for the feast,
the cakes for the feast!

1. Literally: "open yourself"; compare No. 19, l. 2.

6. Upon raising the arm which supports the basket, the sleeve of the yellow, under garment is visible. The outer garments of the peasant women are generally black. [20]

7. Southern Upper Egypt (eṣ-ṣa'īd, as the region south of Asyūṭ is called) is often a synonym for a long distance. A similar example in No. 128, l. 1. Asyūṭ is about as far from Saqqāra as New York is from Washington, or Davenport from London. [195] [484]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

21.

Inattentive Devotions.

×539 In 1873, in Cairo, Goldziher heard a song, in which our numbers 21 and 62 were united by a third piece. (Zeitschr. [114] d. Deutsch. morg. Ges. 33, p. 627.) According to a communi- [171] cation of F. Kern, song 21 is also sung in Burdên, near Zaqāziq (Za'āzi').

Daḫaltē bēt Alla,
la'īt ḥamām aḫḍar;
bila"amû sukkar.
Ya rētni du'to!
Lagl-en-nabi zurto!

[231] I have entered Allah's house,
And found gray doves;
They are fed with sugar.
O, if only I could have a taste of it!
— — But I have visited it for the sake of the Prophet!

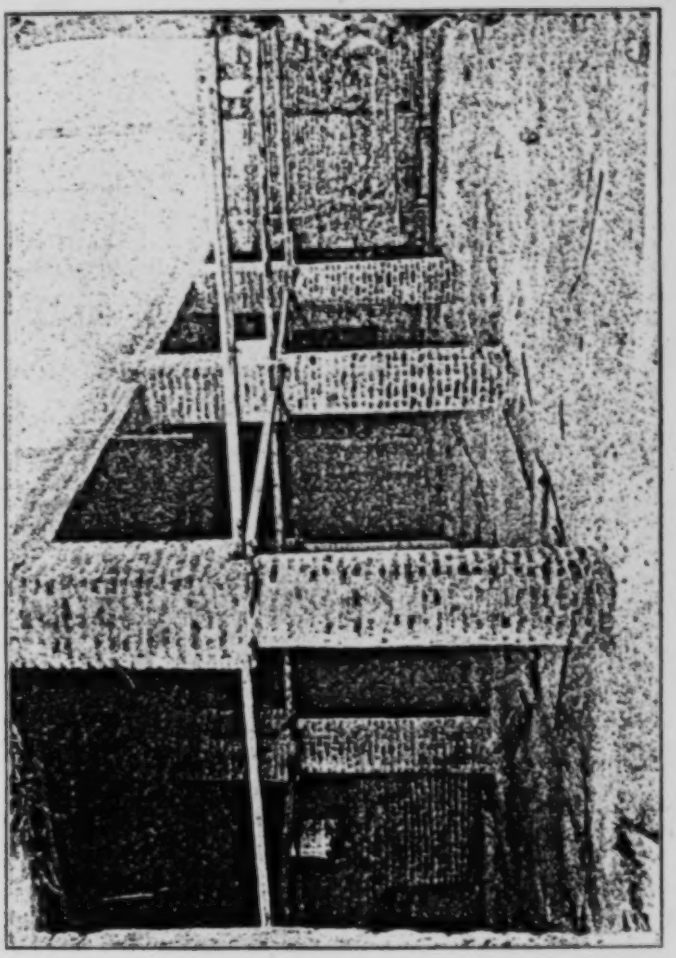
1. The mosque, which the boy has entered for prayer.

2. In the colonnaded, open court (ṣaḥn) of the mosque, [788] in which stands the well for the ablutions. Here doves often alight. Aḫḍar designates the color gray as well as green, although the latter is more commonly the case. (Lane I p. 321.)

3. He reproves himself for his childish, worldly thought. [770] "It", that is, the house of Allah.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

346
333



Photograph by L. Borchardt.

Interior of a Village Mosque.
Ehnasye in Middle Egypt.

8:Schaefer A-8 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

22.

Swing-Song.

539^ 527 857

This song is said to be sung by girls, as they swing at the "great feast". They are teasing friends who are standing near.

The "great feast" ('id el-kebîr) also designated by the Turkish name Korbân Beirâm, is celebrated about two months and a half after the more important "little feast", which ends the holy fast-month Ramaḍân. At the time of the "great feast", even the poorest must have a piece of meat, for it is celebrated in memory of Abraham's sacrifice. [196]

Like all feasts, the "great feast" is celebrated with much noise and merriment. Swings are rarely lacking at the place of the feast.

Ya ḫai, rîḥet hudâmak
zêi kaḫk el-'îd,
ma'gûm-bi-šêbe u-kafûra
u-samnê gedîd.

Brother, the odor of thy garments
Is like feast-cakes,
Kneaded with wormwood and camphor
And fresh fat.

3. Such strange spices as wormwood and camphor are actually baked in these sweet feast-cakes, which are general favorites (compare No. 20. l. 9). Camphor is put, for instance, into coffee. [263]

[P 24 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

23.

Enough of Play!

×539 861 The mothers have difficulty every evening, in inducing the children, who play in the streets until late in the evening, to come home to supper.

A child who is sent out to get the others, speaks:

Ya la'ibin kull el-lēle,
it'aššu u-ta'alu!
Win mā gētûš il-lēle,
laḥaddifkum bi-'il'ēle,
simm el-fār
mi' el-'aṭṭār.
[Iḥbaṭ ya ṭār
kull el-lēle!]

You, who play all night,
Come and have your supper!
And if you do not come this evening,
I shall throw a clod at you!
Mouse-poison
Is (to be had) at the grocer's!
[534] [Beat, tambourine,
The whole night through].

[805] 1. Night begins at sunset. Lēle, "night", often designates, therefore, our evening.
5. 6 I might poison you!
7. 8 May have been taken from some other song.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

At Work on the Excavations.

a) General.

539x
647
554
466

24.

1. The overseers, who are appointed by the Administration of Antiquities for every field of excavation, are often mere custodians from the museum, or something similar, but in their new position they often like to play the gentleman in their dress.

So this one has put on a ṭarbûsh, the red cap with a dark blue tassel, more familiar to us by the name of fez. [292]

He sits on an elevation, in order to gain a better oversight, and to be out of the dust.

Da-l-efendi ʾāʿid ʿala-l-ʿelwe
biṭ-ṭarbūš wcr-raʾabe-l-ḥelwe.

See, the efendi sits upon the height,
With the ṭarbûsh and the sweet neck.

1. Efendi is properly the term of address for Turks (it is the Greek αὐθέντης), now commonly used for officials and all other men of some rank. [576]

2. The word "sweet" is used by the peasant about as frequently as it is by our school-girls. For comparison one should recall the sun-burned, callous neck of a genuine peasant (Vollers). [192]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

25.

[539] [46] [271] At work in the dust and heat, this longing sigh for the water-jug is quite intelligible. Of a hot day, one of the boys steals away every few minutes to snatch a hasty drink.

Ya ballāṣ aḥḍar u-melān!
Ya giḍ'an, iḍ'u rēiskum.
Yalla ikfi šarr ez-zullām!

Thou moist, full water-jug!
You boys, beseech your overseer!
And thou, O Allah, make an end of the wickedness of the oppressors!

[192] 1. Aḥḍar has, beside its color-meanings green and gray (compare No. 21 note on l. 2) also the meaning "moist". For instance our servant, a youth from Saqqāra, would reply to the question: Is the wash dry? "Lā, lissa aḥḍar: No, it is still damp".

2. "Beseech" means, of course: "Beg him to stop the work".

26.

[651] [466] A reminiscence of the time when the excavations were carried on by forced labor (corvée). Not until the sun has run its course, can the workers hope for rest.

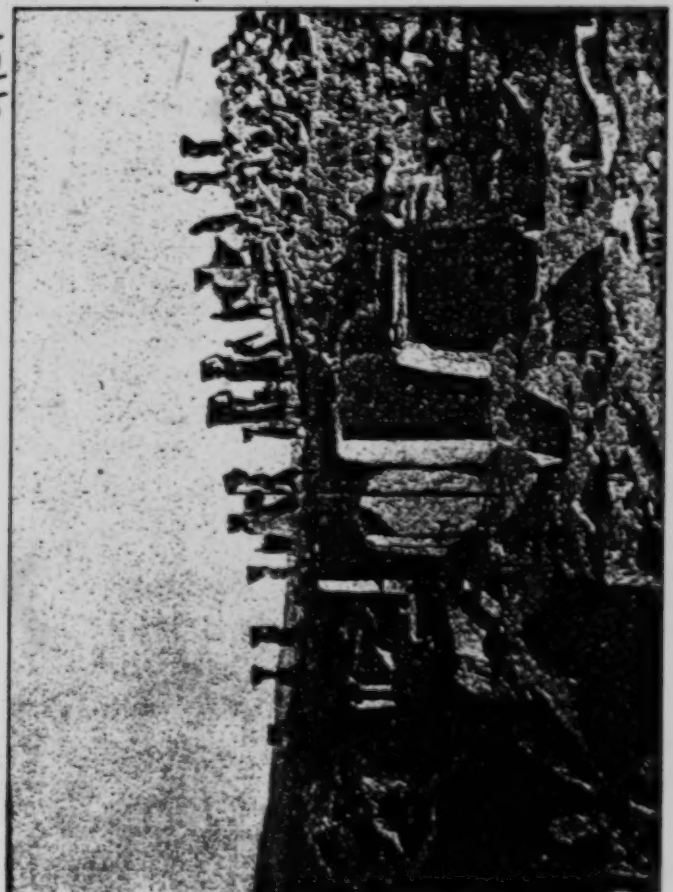
Ya samsē higgi, balāš dalā'a;
di šuṛlē mīri wa-la fīšē šafā'a.

Wander on, O sun, put aside your airs!
For this is forced labor and there is no intercession.

2. Others said here: da šuṛl usiye, that is to say: "labor on the crown-lands".

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

172
482
415



Photograph by L. Borchardt.

At the Work of Excavation.

The Boys with their Rubbish-Baskets. (Excavations at Abusir.)

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

b) Before the Noonday Recess.

27.

539x
461

Compare the remark on No. 33.

Buṣṣê fis-sâ'a,
ya-l-efendi,
til'ana kullina gauwâ'a!

Look at thy watch,
O efendi,
Thou findest us utterly starved.

2. Compare No. 24, note on l. 1.

28.

Ya sîdi, ṛaddi katakîtak
lêmâtu wa-la ḥaddê yeṛîtak.

O sir, let thy chicklets eat their dinner,
Or they will die and none will help thee further!

1. The chicklets are, of course, the workers themselves.

[P 30 is blank]

8;Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

29.

×539 461 *Raddāna lalla, yalli warāna!*
Yib'a-lkum agr we-ṣawāb 'and Alla, yalli warāna!

For Allah's sake, let us eat dinner, ye, who stand behind us!
Reward and recompense ye shall receive from Allah, ye, who stand behind us!

1. "Stand behind us": as overseers and drivers.

30.

Ya'lla, ṛaddi, wis-sams indārit
wil-maṣārin fi-btunna-htārit.

Up, let us eat dinner! The sun has turned itself about
And the entrails in our bellies are all stirred up.

1. The sun has risen to the zenith.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

c) After the Noonday Recess.

31.

539x
461
[264]
[262]

The noonday recess is ended and work begins again. The messenger, bringing the scanty, midday meal from the village to the working-place, is about to return home. The meal consists generally, of flat bread-cakes and radishes.

Kalna wi-'umna, 'o'ba-l-'afa-lla!
rauwah, ya mirsal, 'dwadak 'al-Alla!

We have eaten and risen. If only it were time to leave off work!
Go, messenger, Allah reward thee!

1. 'afa-lla, literally: "Allah forgive!" is a frequent expression for stopping work.

---

d) Before the Hour for Leaving off Work.

32.

The hour for stopping work is pictured here very prettily as a person speaking. During the dictation of this little song, Mahmûd pointed with his hand into the distance.

Da 'afa-lla gâiye min râdi
wi-t'al; el-'afu, ya-syâdi.

See, the hour for ceasing work draws near
And says: "I beg your pardon, gentlemen!"

2. Supply: it is time to close.

33.

×539 805 461 [422] [405] For the peasant, the possession of a watch is an unheard-of luxury. He can reckon the time of day by the position of the sun, accurately enough for his purposes. There lies (compare also No. 27) in the mention of the watches, a slight reproach: It should never happen to you to run over time. For what purpose do you have watches?

Ya-lli ma'akum is-sā'āt,
ādi mī'ād 'afa-lla fāt!

Ye, who have watches,
Look, it is already past time for quitting work!

34.

×539 461 To appreciate this call, one must have stood, one's self, in the dust of an excavating field.

Ya sīdi, 'afa-lla, nāna!
we-bfilna weš-šuṛl 'ammāna.

O Sir, let the working-time be over, it is enough!
We are "finished" and the work has made us blind.

2. "We are finished": we have come to the end of our strength.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

461
291

Photograph by L. Borchardt.

Excavating for papyrus.
Ehnasye in Middle-Egypt.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

35.

'aṣa-lla 'ād 539
we-bṭilna we-ṣāt el-mi'ād! 461

Working-time is over, again,
We are "finished" and time is up!

2. Compare No. 34, note on l. 2.

36.

"It will be dark before we reach home, so call a halt!" 539
Almost all peasants who are away from the village at nightfall, feel very uncomfortable, see No. 4, Note on l. 8. Our boy, Abu Bekr (see preface, p. VIII), once wrote me: Ellēl ṛūl, we-kull en-nās teḫāf minno: "The night is a witch and everybody is afraid of her".

Ya sīdi, ya-lli-msauwaḥna,
ya dōb es-sams terauwaḥna.

O Sir, thou who hast brought us (hither),
The sun will hardly bring us (home)!

1. That is to say: by whose command we have come to work.

37.

Compare the remark on No. 36.

Ya sīdi, ya-lli-mdādīna,
ya dōb es-sams tewaddīna.

O Sir, thou who treatest us kindly,
The sun will scarcely guide us (home)!

1. "Treatest .. kindly": as a nurse (dāda) would.

37

[P. 36 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

38.

×539
466

El-ʿafu, ya bē, yafendina,
win kunna ʿibna terabbīna;
win kunna uladak teraddīna!
Ya dōb es-sams tewaddīna.

I beg your pardon, O Bey, our master!
If we have done something badly, then reprove us;
And if we have been thy sons, then content us!
The sun will scarcely guide us (home).

[554] [570] 1. By using very high titles in addressing their masters the peasants often curry favor. Many of our people addressed us as "Bey" and it often happened that some poor devil, asking in fear and trembling for something, would proceed in one breath to the superlative thus: "ya bē, ya bāša, ya brinz": "bey, pasha, prince".

[593] 2. That is to say: "thy good sons". For the Egyptian, the adjective is superfluous, as sons usually behave very respectfully toward their father. Even sons who are but fairly well brought up, will not, in the presence of their father, either be seated, eat or smoke, without special command to do so.

2. 3. Another said: rabbīna, raddīna.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

39.

The New Railway.

A girl, named Dināre wishes to go to Ṭanṭa, to the tomb of Shēkh Aḥmed. (Compare No. 8—9.) At the time of the origin of this little song, the railroad from Cairo to Alexandria had probably just been built. (It was opened in 1856.) Ṭanṭa lies in the province of Ṣarbiye, about fifty-four miles from Cairo, on the railroad between Cairo and Alexandria; the capital of the province of Beḥêre, Damanhûr, lies on the same railroad, still nearer to Alexandria, something over thirty-six miles from Ṭanṭa.

Dināre 'alet: Yamma,
ana rāiḥe-s-Seiyid azār,
warāḥ balad el-Beḥēre
watfarrag 'al-bagār.

Dināre said: "Mother,
I am going to visit the Seiyid
And going to Beḥēre
To look at the railway".

Circumcision.

40. 41.

Most boys are circumcised when six or seven years old, and the day is always celebrated by some festivity, at which the boy is decked out and led through the streets.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

40.

[539] [304] [852] The father hurries home to the festivity.

'Addīni, ya-ṣ'addāwi!
an-arauwaḥ baladi
warauwaḥ bis-salāme
waṭāhir waladi.

Ferry me over, ferryman!
I wish to go to my village
And go safely,
And have my son circumcised.

J. H. Churi, in Sea Nile the Desert etc. London 1853, p. 309 (reprinted by Buecher, Arbeit und Rhythmus, p. 429) gives this song with a melody. The first two verses are also to be found in a song of Egyptian origin, which was dictated to Dalman (p. 141) by a sailor in Sidon.

41.

[304] [292] The women are decking out the boy for the procession, with a necklace and a ṭarbûsh (compare No. 24). The mother speaks:

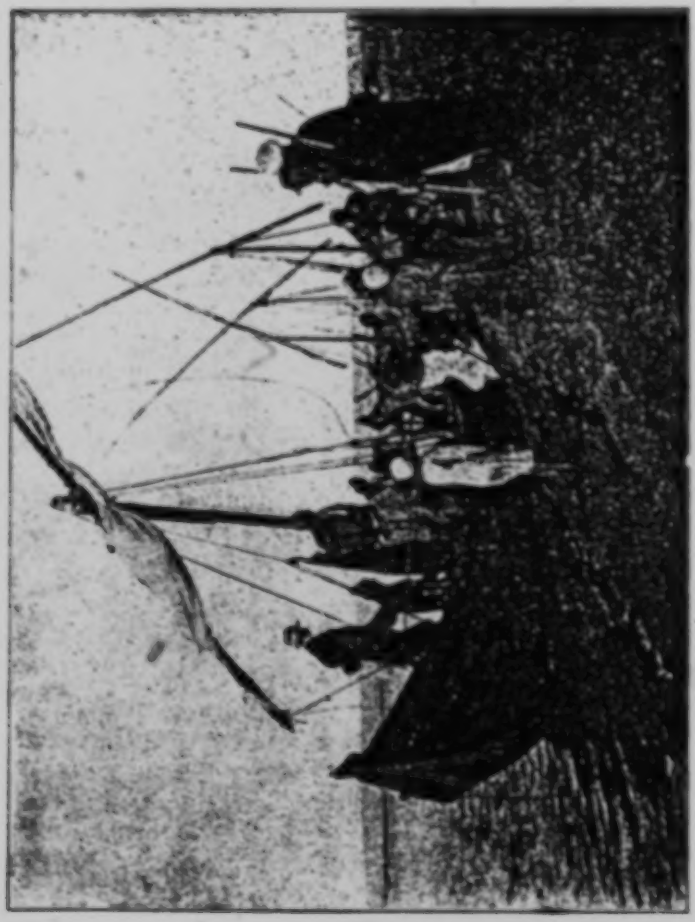
El-'o'd 'o'di, wan-aldumo bc-hawāye!
Gibt eṭ-ṭarābiš, labbasû-li ḥadāye,
we-'adāit ummo rāide ḥaṭṭāye!

The necklace is my necklace, and I shall string it as I please!
I have brought the ṭarbûsh, dress him (the boy) here before me,
(So smartly) that the enemy of his mother will be sick (from envy)!

[114] 3. This is Maḥmûd's interpretation, but it may be that he is wrong in this interpretation, which demands rāqide instead of rāide.

8:Schaefer A-8 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

501
291



Photograph by Freiherr von Oefele.

Ferry-boat in Upper-Egypt.
Al Ḥaǧǧ Qandīl.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

42.

The Inventor of the Shādûf.

539x 406 312 [174]

Shādûf is the modern name for a very ancient contrivance for raising water from the river to the higher level of the fields. There is evidence of its existence in Egypt as early as 1500 B. C. It resembles our well-sweep. Tied to the longer end of the lever by a rope, usually of plaited palm-fibre, is a leather pail, while the shorter end is weighted by a large stone or a lump of dry, Nile mud. The pail is filled in the river by the laborer and then emptied into a trench in the field above. (Compare the illustration.) If the banks are high, two or more shādûfs are employed, ranged in tiers, one above the other.

Of course the name of the inventor, Ṣâliḥ Zabâdi is mere invention; just as names are frequently inserted at pleasure, in such songs.

Śawādif
we-ḥbalha līf
wedlauha-glūd ma'zẽ gudādī.
We-aṣlo mā ṭalla' eš-šawādif
el-marḥūm Ṣāliḥ Zabādi.

Shādûfs,
Their ropes are of palm-fibre
And their pails of goat-skins.
And it was in ancient times, that shādûfs were invented
By the blessed Ṣâliḥ Zabâdi

[P. 42 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

43.

Hard Labor.

x599
461
312

Work at the shādûf (see No. 42) at which the laborer stands up to the waist in water, unceasingly drawing the pail at the end of the lever up and down, is considered one of the hardest of tasks. The songs which they sing while thus employed, of which numbers 42—46 are examples, are usually very melancholy, both in words and melody.

Ḥakamtĕ, ya bēn, bi-šan'i?
baḥbaḥ el-ḥaiye!
La ummĕ tibki
wa-la 'amme
wa-la ḫaiye.

Hast Thou resolved upon strangling me, O God?
Loosen the noose!
No mother weeps (for me),
No aunt,
No sister.

[776]

1. "Strangling", namely: from the hard labor. According to Maḥmûd, bēn is a designation for God.

3—5. I, poor fellow, have so little any way, and no one on earth to love me.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

312
406
291

A Shādûf.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Grievous Parting.

44.

Ya sāyi' ir-ragb,
ṭaṭi-li ri'ab en-nā',
lamma awadda' muḥebbīni
wa'awid! — sā'!
Wallā, el-furā' ṣa'b!
Ya ḥadi el-maṭaye, sā'!
tekūn 'al-alla!

Thou driver of the caravan,
Bend down the camels' necks for me,
That I may take leave of my loved ones,
Again and again! — Drive on!
By Allah the parting is hard!
There! thou driver of the camels, now drive on,
And Allah be with thee!

2. The camel usually carries its head very high, and in order to make the animal lie down, the driver pulls its head down by the bridle.

[P. 46 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

45.

×539 As in the preceding song, the person addressed, is the caravan-driver.

Istanne telat daragat,
lamma awadda' rufa'ati
wa'l-luhum:
'azzam Allah agrukum fiye!

Wait three degrees,
That I may take leave of my companions
[576] And say to them:
"May Allah bless you richly for all that ye have done for me!"

[405] [805] 1. Three degrees on the primitive sun-dial, which is made by thrusting a stick into the ground. According to it, the periods of work at the shâdûf are regulated.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

46.

539*
576

Ṣubiḥ mesāfir, gā ḥabībi yewaddā'ni,
biki u-ball el-maḥarim. 'ultê-lo: lē ya'ni?
'al-li: u''ud ḥadaye telāt sā'āt tesallīni.
Walla, fura' el-ḥabaib ṣa'b, ya rabbi!

In the morning, as I was starting on a journey, my beloved came to take leave of me.
Her handkerchiefs were drenched with tears. I said to her: "Wherefore?"
She said: "O stay with me three hours, that thou mayest comfort me!"
Truly, the parting of lovers is grievous, O my Lord!

1. "Three", is used in such songs elsewhere also, as a round number; compare No. 45. [201]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

47.

Sympathy.

In a gentleman's garden strange workmen are busied. In the centre of the garden is a fountain, and the ḥarim (harem), in which the ladies sit, is close to the garden. Evening is approaching.

Ḍill il-ʿaṣāri mâl ʿal-faṣʾīye
u-ramaš baʿēno: waʾʾaf el-gamʿīye!
Yâ-l-arbaʿīn, yalli ʿala-l-ʾullīye,
mōt el-ġarīb fil-bilād ḥaṭīye.
Yâ ʿišt-ana! ʿal-ġarīb, yaḫwati,
abki beḥurʾa wed-demāʿ teraši.

"The afternoon shadow inclines toward the fountain
And says with its eye: 'Let the laborers cease!'
O, ye forty ladies, who sit in your chamber,
The death of a stranger in the land is a sin."
"Oh, how sad am I! For the stranger, O, my sisters,
I bitterly weep and my tears flow!"

1—4. One of the laborers speaks: "Do not let us be tormented to death! You, too, would have to answer for this sin". Forty is frequently used as a round number. Compare the beginning of the story of the "Ours de cuisine" in Spitta's Contes arabes modernes (p. 12).

5—6. Are the words of a lady to the others. The translation "flow" is Mahmuds.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Calls of the Radish-Vender.

534*
262

48.

Radishes are eaten with great relish everywhere in Egypt, but especially in the country. They are of a particular variety with meaty leaves.

In a manuscript about a hundred years old, belonging to the Reichsmuseum at Budapest, containing poems in vulgar Arabic composed by Copts, there are to be found some also which contain the observation: "After the manner of: Raiyān ya figl aḥḍar". (F. Kern.)

Raiyān ya figl aḥḍar,
ya ḥilu zē sukkar!
wel-figlē di figli
wana elli ḥarito 'al-'egli!
nuṣṣ el-balad tišhad-li,
ḥatte-l-banāt el-bukkar.

Fresh, green radishes,
Sweet as sugar!
And these radishes are my radishes
And I have ploughed them with my heifer!
Half the village can bear me witness,
Even to the unmarried girls.

4 "Them", namely: the fields in which they grow.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

49.

Raiyān ya figl aḫḍar!
Feddān we-nuṣṣo-mkassar!
La'etni gamīle betitmaḫṭar,
we-saḥabt ginebi we-ḥmāri
we-nādēt, ma ḥaddē gāni.

Fresh, green radishes!
An acreful and half of it broken!
A beauty met me, swaying as she walked,
But I drew my baskets and my donkey away,
[And called but no one came to me.]

2. A field, of about one and one twentieth acres, full of them, and half of them broken in pulling them, — the radishes were so tender (according to Maḥmūd). Vollers suggests another interpretation: "One acre of the field is cultivated, but half of this acre is encumbered with debts (mekassar)."

4. The two large baskets, which are strapped or tied together, and hang on either side of the donkey. According to Maḥmūd this line means: I withstood the temptation because I was so anxious to bring the radishes fresh to you.

5. The connection between this line and the preceeding ones, is not very clear. It is possible that the line does not belong here. It occurs also in No. 74 and there in the proper place.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

443
351
516
137

Photograph by L. Borchardt.

A Vegetable-Vender and a Water-Vender in the Village of Qiseh.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

50.

Good Company.

539
576

Words of gratitude to parting visitors.

Lēla sa'ide!
bu-ru'yakum ḥuṣāli rāḥ.
U-kan me'i rēz,
sā'et šafkum 'am rāḥ.

Good night!
At sight of you, my trouble vanished.
Vexation lodged with me,
But when it saw you, it rose and left.

[P 56 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

51.

Ingratitude.

*539
681

Eṣ-ṣāḥib illi baʿazz el-ʾāt rabbēnâ,
minno gara ʿēb. Kābirna u-barrēnâ.
Kuturet ʿiyābo,
u-kull en-nās diryā-bo.
ʾabbaḥ, rikībna maṭāyâna, u-ḥallēnâ.

By the friend whom we brought up with the best of food,
By him evil was done. We were proud and did not punish him;
But his evil deeds increased,
And everybody heard of it.
He became insolent, so we mounted our camels and left him.

1. We relinquished the field of combat to him, rather than degrade ourselves by disputing with him.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

52.

Reward of Politeness.

Like the German proverb: "One need but carry hat in hand to travel safely throughout the land." 539x 576

In reading this picturesque description of the reward of politeness, do not fail to remember that the person speaking is a poor, Egyptian peasant earning only his two and a half piastres a day. (About twelve cents). [465]

Ṣabāḥ el-ḫēr, ya lamme!
Ṣabbaḥ el-ward ʿala-z-zēn.
Ya min ṣabbaḥ, saddē dēno,
wištara, we-la baʾāš ʿalē dēn,
wištara ʿabd balfēn,
yistāhil rukāb el-ḫēl.

Good morning to you assembled here!
The roses wished the glorious one good morning.
He who wishes a good morning, wipes out his debts,
And buys and has no debts, [467]
And buys a black slave for two thousand, [435]
Who is worthy to ride upon horses. [554]

2. "The glorious one" is the Prophet. With this greeting of the roses, compare No. 6, l. 7 and No. 7, l. 2.

3. That is, at an exceptionally high price. The coin is not indicated; 2000 is frequently used as a large round number. [801]

6. After the manner of a gentleman.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

53.

To Vain Beauties.

x 539
302

Why wish to touch up natural beauty by artificial means?

El-ʿēn sōda min Alla,
wil-kohl lāhir lē?
wil-ḫadd aḥmar min Alla,
wil-ḥosn-Yūsif lē?

The eye is black from Allah,
Wherefore then the eye-paint?
And the cheek is red from Allah,
Wherefore then Joseph's-beauty"?

2. Their black, shining eyes are the pride of the Egyptian women. Eye-paint (kohl) is the well-known, black coloring matter, which is used to day, as in ancient Egypt, to blacken the edges of the eyelids. The peasant-women often disagreeably overdo it.

4. "Joseph's-beauty" is the name of a red cosmetic (compare Klunzinger p. 184). Joseph is often mentioned as an ideal of beauty.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

54.

Mecca and Egypt.

539x 186

Banter on the desolate landscape of the holy place, compared with home, the beautiful, fruitful valley of the Nile.

Ya ulād Mikke, iš ḥal wādikum?
Wādine aḥsan min wādikum,
lūla-n-nabi ma kunna negikum!

Ye sons of Mecca, how is your valley?
Our valley is more beautiful than your valley.
Were it not for the Prophet's sake, we should not have come to you.

The first two verses, referring however to Damiette instead of Mecca, are to be found in a song in J. H. Churi's Sea Nile the Desert etc. London 1853 p. 317 (reprinted by Buecher in Arbeit und Rhythmus, p. 434).

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

55.

Arrogance.

×539 576 I am a much-traveled, important man. Compared with me, what a pitiful fellow you are!

Ruzz is, properly speaking, the name of the Mamalukes, whom Mohammed 'Ali exterminated. For Mahmûd it merely designated the "soldiers who came from Stambul". Sport is here made of the soldiers. In No. 56 we find the opposite case.

[114] According to F. Kern, it is a sailor-song. Lines 1 and 3 are sung by the leader; line 2, and a fourth lacking here, are sung by the others.

Mikke biladi, wel-ḥabaš manzali
we-ummak tebî' er-ruzz, ya Nōfali.
Er-ruzz akl el-ṛuzz, ya Nōfali.

Mecca is my home-land and I live in Abyssinia.
[And thou?] Thy mother sells rice, Nōfali.
Rice is soldiers' food, Nōfali!

[551] 2. Nōfali is a man's name.

[262] 3. That rice once formed or now forms the principal element of the soldier's food is new to me. The word ruzz (rice) is probably used only because of its resemblance to ṛuzz (Mamaluke).

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

56.

Self Importance.

Addressed to a wretched, dirty fellow who is something of a braggart. He looks like a smutty, black baking-tin, but acts as if he were of great importance.

Alla ʿaṣ-ṣag el-hindi,
fellah we-ʿāmilš gindi!

Allah! look at the fine baking-tin!
Only a peasant and would play the soldier!

1. Literally: "Indian baking-tin" The adjective "(East) Indian" is used frequently with stuffs as an equivalent for "excellent".

2. One must not have in mind the tame, modern Egyptian military, but rather the Turkish soldiers of former times. Compare No. 55.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

57.

Rallying One's Self.

539 The payment of a certain sum to the wife, which shall remain her personal property, is one of the indispensable things pertaining to a legal marriage (compare the expression in No. 71, l. 1). The amount of the sum depends, naturally, upon the position and the charms of the bride. The lowest legally allowed sum, is about a dollar and a quarter (five shillings).

A pretty example of a poor peasant poking fun at himself. The dowry which he is able to command is no more than [435] the price of a skull-cap, namely: seven and a half cents (four pence).

Yabu libde, ya fellāh, yāne!
wana biddi aḫod Behāne
waddīha nuṣṣ el-'abdīye,
wel-bā'i agib bo ṭa'īye.

O I with the felt cap, I, the peasant!
I wish to marry Behāne!
And I will give her the half of my wages,
And with the rest I will buy me a skull-cap.

291 1. Libde is the thick, closely fitting, felt cap, which the poor peasants wear. Usually it is of coarse, brown felt. Abu-libde, "father (that is: wearer) of the libde" is a frequent term of derision for a peasant.

3. Another said: nuṣṣ ed-damklye.

4. Ṭā'lye is the white, knitted or crocheted, likewise closely fitting, little cap, which the men wear underneath the felt-cap.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

58.

Lamentations of a Builder.

539
343

A builder, having undertaken to build a pretentious bath, sits before the unsuccessful edifice and ridicules his work and himself.

Ḥammām ya-skanderāni,
ḥammām, šurlak barrāni!
ḥammām, wan-illi banēto,
ḥammām, u-na ḥaddē ṛēri.

Thou Alexandrian bath!
O bath, how wretchedly thou art made!
O bath, and it was made by me,
O bath, and nobody but myself!

2. According to Maḥmûd, barrāni, "from abroad", is used here in the same sense as when applied to money, meaning "false" or "under value". Once, wishing to tell one of our men that the small coin of Egypt is coined in Berlin, I began thus: "All your Egyptian money is from abroad (barrāni)". He took fright and interrupted me with the words: "No, thou jokest, it is full value". [192]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

50.

Good Reason for Pride!

Dīnâre libiset mandīl
u-mkallafâ sittīn.
Ya 'āši', ya meskīn,
ṭarraḥūk 'al-ḥašab!

Dināre has put on a head-kerchief,
Which has cost her all of sixty (faḍḍa).
Now, poor lover,
Have thyself buried!

1. Dināre is a girl's name.

4. Literally: Mayest thou be stretched upon the wood (the bier). The girl is so proud of her cheap finery. Sixty (faḍḍa) are about one and a half piastres, equalling seven and a half cents.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

60.

Dogs of Arabs.

Everywhere on the margin of the Nile valley, are to be found Arab families, who, with their low, brown tents and a little live stock, shift north or south according to the season of the year. Their bristly, barking dogs are not particularly friendly animals. Moreover, perhaps even the Arabs themselves are here designated by the term, "dogs". 539x 563 186 [221] [231]

Ma 'ultê-lak, ya 'Ali?:
Baddar bina, baddar!
aḥsan kilāb el-'arab fuṭ-ṭur' bithabbar.
Win habbarūk, ya 'Ali,
maktūb u-m'addar.

Did I not tell thee so, 'Ali?
"Let us make an early start, an early start!
Else the Arabs' dogs will attack thee on the streets.
But if they should fall upon thee, 'Ali,
Then it is thus written and decreed."

2—5 contain a former warning, which is again given 'Ali. He laughed at it and they did not start until later. Then he actually suffered harm at the hands of the Arabs.

5 In the book of fate, according to the fatalistic doctrine held by the Moslems. [812]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

61.

A Mother's Solicitude.

[539] [361] [491]

In Middle and Lower Egypt, the villages are connected with one another by earthen dikes, which, during the time of the inundation, form the only communicating roads.

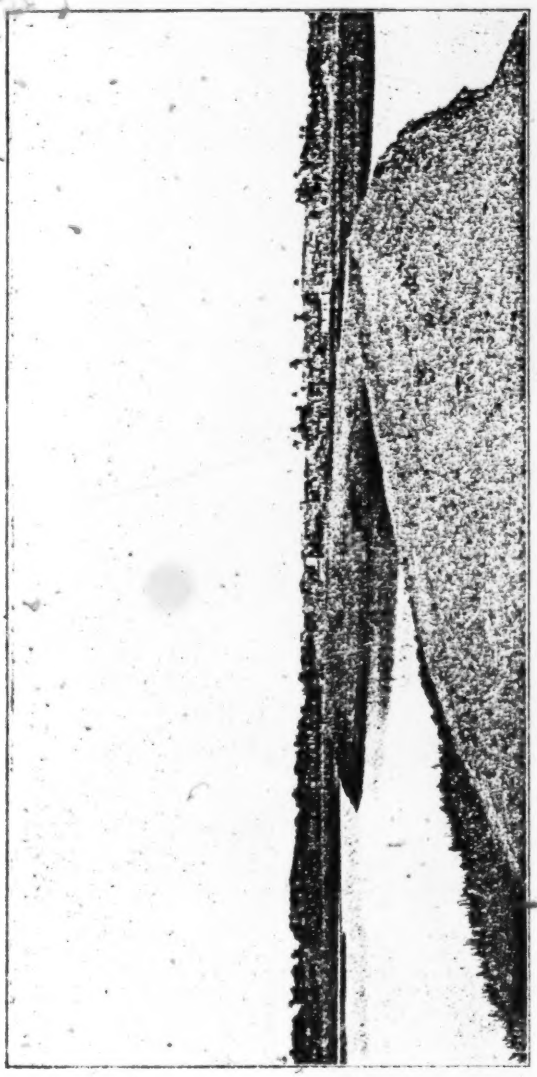
[625] The police are always at hand to imprison people [illegible] roll-call, often, one or another of our workmen was announced as maḥbûs or "imprisoned".

Mā-lik betigri 'al-ǧusūr u-ḫēfe?
bagri 'ala waladi ḫadû eṭ-ṭēfe.

Why dost thou run so anxiously about on the dikes?
I seek my son, whom the patrol has caught!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

312
491
361



Photograph by L. Borchardt.

The dike which leads from Beni-Suēf to the town of Ehnasye.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

62.

Lamentations for the Dead.

The lamentations of a mother over her fallen son, named 'Abbûḥ. As the mention of the coat of mail indicates, it is, without doubt, an old song, or, from the favorite tales of the adventures of renowned Arab heroes.

Compare the remark on No. 21.

'Abbûḥ, ya 'Abbûḥ,
ibn-el-'arab madbûḥ,
wummo warâ bitnûḥ,
wit'ûl: ya waladi,
ya lâbis ez-zaradî,
sikkinetak ḫûṣa
fil-arḍê marsûsa,
ma rassêhâš illâni.

'Abbûḥ, 'Abbûḥ,
The Arab, is slain.
His mother mourns for him
And says: "O my son,
O thou who wearest the coat of mail,
Thy sword is like a palm-leaf,
Buried in the earth,
And no other than I has buried it."

6. "Like a palm-leaf" means, according to Maḥmûd: slender, pointed and two-edged.

7. The meaning of the last two lines is not very clear. Did the mother bury the dead together with his sword? Another of our men dictated: ... madfûse, ma rassêhâš illâni, hence I translate: "bury".

[P 68 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

63.

Good Wishes.

×539 858 A little girl is addressed, who, according to Maḥmûd, is still so small, that she is compared with "goslings which are still green (aḫḍar)". Compare No. 64. Fortune shall so favor the little one, that she shall some day eat with a golden spoon from a silver dish.

Alla ye'ēnik, ya uzēzet Ragab;
wiṭ-ṭišt[e] faḍḍa, wil-ma'ālī' dahab.

Allah help thee, O Ragab's gosling!
[415] May thy dish be of silver, the spoons of gold!

[551] 1. According to Maḥmûd, Ragab is the name of the child's father.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

64.

Dreams of the Future.

539x
304
858

For explanation of the manner of address compare with the preceding song. Here prosperity is wished the little one, and a fine tatooing — the pride of a pretty girl — is promised her. Girls are usually tatooed at the age of five or six.

In the country almost all the women are tatooed; most frequently on the front part of the chin and on the lip, but also on the forehead, breast, backs of the hands and on the feet. The designs are pricked in with needles and blue or green coloring matter rubbed in. Compare Nos. 114 and 126.

Alla yçʿānik, ya uzēz el-Yaman!
win ʾamet el-wizze we-ʾamet saʿdīha,
ladu" lil-wizze ʿala kaʿbīha.

Allah help thee, gosling of Yemen!
And when the goose has grown up and her fortune has grown too,
Then I will tatoo the goose upon her wrists and ankles.

1. Yemen = Arabia Felix, Araby the Blest.

2. Upon Mahmûd's explanation of ʾamet saʿdīha I was strongly reminded of: "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men". Added to this were riches of course.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

65.

The Fairy-Tale Prince.

This is probably a nursery-rhyme, in which we must not look for much connection. 'Allâm is the name of a king in the romances of famous Arab heroes.

Da nabīna ṣalla u-ṣām,
u-banā-lo fil-ganne ma'ām.
Serīye bint el-'Allām
we-ḫaṭabha ibn es-sulṭān.

Our Prophet has prayed and fasted
And has built a place for himself in Paradise.
Serīye is the daughter of 'Allām
And the Sultan's son has sought her in marriage.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

66.

A Connoisseur's Judgment.

539x
53

A sailor's song about the girls of three villages in Middle Egypt.

El-mulāḥ fiṭ-Ṭarfaye,
wir-radi fil-Kufūr.
tiṭ'agbum bil-'aṣāyib,
ya banat el-Mēmūn.

The pretty ones live in Ṭarfâye
And the ugly ones in el-Kufūr.
Ye wear your head-kerchiefs so daintily,
Ye maidens of el-Mēmûn.

1. eṭ-Ṭarfāye: a place on the west shore of the Nile, a little south of el-Bedreshēn, which place is known to all visitors of Saqqāra.

2. el-Kufūr, literally: "the villages". According to Mahmûd, these mean seven places situated very near together, on the west shore, south of Ṭarfāye, but his idea of them seemed very vague.

4. el-Mēmûn: a place, about seven miles south of el-Wasṭa, the station from which the railroad branches off to the Fayûm.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

67.

A Stately Appearance.

×539

Fayit ʿalēye fārid es-samsīye
we-zaḥ'it ḥuṣāno dauwarit ʿamalīye.

He passed by me with sun-shade raised
And the neigh of his horse sought deeds.

68.

Her Lover's Tent.

The maiden sees her distinguished lover ascend to his showy tent. Compared to the beautiful picture at the beginning, the jingling rhyme of the Arabic at the end is in unfavorable contrast.

Ḍill il-ʿaṣāri māl u-māl
u-ḥabak ʿala-ṣ-ṣiwān ṣiwāno,
ṣiwānak il-ʿāli,
illi šarṛal bāli.
Bāli, maʿak bāli,
ya ṭāliʿ il-ʿāli!
sikkīnetak faḍḍa, ʿal-farše bitlāli.

The afternoon shadow has bent lower and lower
And over the tent has woven its tent,
Over thy lofty tent,
Which occupies my thoughts.
My thoughts, my thoughts are with thee,
Thou who ascendest to thy lofty (tent)!
Thy sword is of silver and shines on the divan.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

69.

Why Dost Thou Beat me, Mother?

Bil-amān, ya-lummē,
wa-la tuḍrub aiye!
Lē tuḍrubni
wana-smi Lēle?
Rummān ṣudri ṭāb
u-ṭarah ég-genēne.
Ana ma'āk 'and el-'āḍi
fi-hāza-l-lēle.

Do not punish me, mother,
And do not beat me!
Why dost thou beat me
When my name is Lēle ("night")?
The pomegranates of my breast are ripe,
And the garden beareth fruit.
I shall go with thee to the judge
This very evening.

4. The word lēle, "night", and Lēle, the name of a girl, have nothing to do with one another. They were originally two different words, which, in the modern language, have the same sound and for that reason are made use of here for a pun.

The girl means: "Is it not perfectly natural, that I should think of things which my very name suggests?"

7. He will concede that I am right! The 'āḍi (Qâḍi) or ecclesiastical judge, is called upon to decide especially in affairs of marriage.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

70.

Pangs of Spring.

×539 Dialogue between a girl, named Nefise (ll. 3–4), and her lover (ll. 1–2).

Rummān ig-genāin yaḥḍar
u-rummānik, ya Nefīse, ṭab.
U-Nefīse, rāshe betūgaḥha;
fi-'urḍak tiktib-li ḥegāb.

"The pomegranates of the garden are green,
And thy pomegranates, Nefise, are ripe."
"And Nefise's head aches;
Have pity on me, write me an amulet."

2. Compare No. 110, note on l. 6.

3. Of course from pangs of love.

4. Such amulets usually consist of a little piece of paper, [789] bearing Koran verses, folded and sewed into a little leather bag. Almost everybody wears one or more such amulets.

Here the "write me an amulet" is, of course, only a circumlocution.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

71.

Worldly Wise Advice.

539x
581
834

Yabu-l-bint el-baliġ biḥha,
ʾablĕ ṣalāḥ el-bint mēdīʿ.
Yabūha, mā-tʿulsĕ ʿalēha: di ḥurra;
lamma-tšūf eg-gidʿān barra,
tiʿmil zē el-mohra lamma-tšīʿ.

O father of the marriageable daughter, sell her
Before the maiden's virtue is lost.
O thou, her father, say not of her: "She is an honorable girl".
When she sees the fellows outside,
She acts like an inflamed young mare.

1. "Sell", that is to say: "marry her off"; compare No. 57.
3. Thou canst not call her an honorable girl.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

72.

The Wakening of Love.

×539
832

Yamma, ya rigli, la"ha-lli māši.
'ēn el-'arūse lil-'arīs bitrāši.
Ya lēl ṭūl, ya fegr ma-t'allāši,
lamma yenām el-ḥill waiye ḥalilo,
u-fa"aš er-rummān 'ala-l-furāši.

O mother, my foot! He who passes, has touched it!
The eye of the virgin weeps for her bridegroom.
O, night linger on, O, dawn come not nigh,
When my beloved sleeps with his companion,
And breaks open the pomegranates upon the pillow.

1. The passer-by wishes to enter into relations with her.
3. Compare No. 110, note on l. 6.

73.

The Day That I Saw Thee . . .

[114] The beginning of a song which Vollers took down from the lips of a blind sailor, at Assuân in 1890. (Zeitschr. d. Deutsch. morg. Ges. LVIII, 228.)

Yōm šuftak ḥabbētak ḥaliṣ,
u-sa'et-lak bil-widd el-ḥaliṣ.

The day that I saw thee, I loved thee dearly.
And I have sought thee with sincere love.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

74.

A Thief in the Night.

539x

This song was usually attached to No. 125.

Of course not a thief who is seeking for valuables. The girl speaks:

Bil-lēl gāni ḥarāmi,
biṭ-ṭūb ṭauwaḥ ʿalēye.
We-nādêt, ma-ḥaddᵉ gāni.

There came a thief by night to me,
And bits of brick he threw at me.
I called, but no one came to help me.

2. Modern Egyptian bricks are exactly like the ancient ones, sun-dried only, not baked. They consist of the tough, Nile mud, which is deposited by the inundation; "bits of brick" are, therefore, rather harmless missiles.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Flatteries.

75.

Ya naʿme, ya belīle,
Yammū šaʿār, ya ṭawīle.

Thou tender one, so like belīle!
Thou, with the abundant hair, thou slender one!

1. Belīle is a favorite dish prepared from corn, milk and honey. The sweetheart is compared with this delicate, sweet dish.

76.

Again, as in the preceding song, slender women are meant.

Ya naẖletēn el-ʿalāli,
ya balaḥkum dawa!

O ye two palms of the upper chamber,
Your dates are medicine!

Dalman has also these two lines, as a refrain to a love-song. In Dalman's song they run thus (p. 249):

Ya naẖlāt bi-l-ʿalāli O ye palms of the upper chambers,
ya balaḥhum dawa O their dates are medicine,
Ya nār ū-ʿēn. O light of the eyes!

Dalman heard the song on a steamer running between Bērût and Alexandria.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

77.

539*

These lines, which Maḥmûd applied to a woman bathing in the river, were almost always combined with No. 40; but they are in all probability a remnant of another song.

Šilbe is a species of silvery, Nile fish. Šilbe ʿarabi is supposed to designate an especially good variety. [136]

ʿāim bēn el-merākib
zē eš-šilbe-l-ʿarabi.

Swimming between the ships
Like the silver-fish.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MRI3
Upper Egypt

78.

A Ready Answer.

×539 312 462 521 In the morning the women and girls come to the river-bank, to draw water with their Balālīṣ (singular ballās), the well-known, and characteristic water-jars. This is always accompanied by much jesting and talking.

Here a young man teases the girls (ll. 1—2) and they give him a ready answer (ll. 3—4).

Ya banāt, yalli betimlu,
kira-l-mōrade kām?
ʿAšara min abu ṭaʾa
we-bōse min taḥt el-ḫuzām.

"You girls who are drawing water,
How much is the rent of the watering-place?"
"Ten of 'those with the window'
And a kiss under the nose-ring."

[477] [436] 3. The peasants call the escutcheon on the back of European coins, a "window". Thus the people distinguish the English sovereigns: "abu-š-šibbāk" = "father of the window" and "abu-l-ḫuṣān" = "father of the horse". The latter are, besides, more popular among the peasants. In our song of course no small coin is meant.

[301] [264] 4. The nose-ring is usually put through the right side of the nose, and its pendants hang down over the mouth, so that in order to put anything into the mouth, they must be held aside.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

415
482
291
312
142

Women Drawing Water.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

79.

A Cool Reception.

539x
832

Ya ḫāli 'al-bedawiye.
u-la'etni fid-darb eḍ-ḍaiya'.
wel-ḫatim fi-ṣbaḥha yezaiya'.
Hallet el-'āzib mitnaiya'.
Min ginno ḥarra' eṭ-ṭa'iye.

O, in what a state am I, because of the Beduin girl!
She met me in the narrow path,
And the ring on her finger sparkled. [301]
She left the lad standing, so that he flew into a rage. [152]
In wrath he threw his cap into the fire.

1. El-bedawiye (the Beduin girl) is a frequent subject of the songs of the peasant lads.

4. The sudden change from the first to the third person, is not a rare occurrence in such songs.

5. Respecting this cap compare No. 57, note on l. 4.

[P. 84 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

80.

Caution.

x539
832

Ya munyati, gūdi
u-kīdi-l-ʿazūl,
wirḫi ḍalal šaʿrik
yeṛaṭṭi-n-nehūd,
widdīni bōse u-gūd!
ʾal-li: ana ḫāif
tiṭmaʿ teʿaddi-l-ḥodūd!

O thou my desire, be generous
And outwit the watcher!
Loosen the veil of thy hair,
That it may cover thy breasts,
And give me a kiss and be generous!
Then she said to me: I fear,
Thou desirest to overstep the bounds!

2. The watcher, who prevents lovers from meeting, plays [83] a large part in oriental love-songs. This is explained by the strict watch which is kept over the women and girls. In the country this vigilance is not as strict toward women who are [184] not especially attractive, as it is in the city. The further [291] one goes from Cairo, the less one sees of veiled women.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

81.

Wind and Love.

539x 832

The point of this song lies in the double meaning of the word hawa: "wind" and "love".

According to Maḥmûd the situation is as follows: The [192] man is a watchman (ṣafîr) of the Administration of Antiquities in the desert, like Maḥmûd himself.

In a hut made of reeds, he takes shelter against the [342] hawa, the wind. (ll. 1—2). The hut is, however, no protection (l. 3) against the other hawa, love. He has asked a girl to visit him in his tent, but receives the pretty "Schnaderhuepfel"-reply contained in ll. 4—7.

[We have no English equivalent for Schnaderhuepfel, it [114] being a kind of extemporaneous, doggerel rhyme, peculiar to the peasants of the Alpine regions. Transl.]

ʿAli ʿElēwe banā-lo fil-gibāl iḫṣāṣ,
biddo yeḥāš el-hawa.
Hāwa el-hawa yinḥāš?
Wir-raml lam yin'iriš,
weš-šōk lam yindās,
wil-bint lam tinḥiṭib,
illa-blammet nās.

ʿAli ʿElēwe has built himself huts in the desert;
He wishes to keep off the wind (hawa)
And will he be able to keep off love (hawa)?
But one does not chew sand,
Nor on thorns does one tread,
And the girl will not be wooed
Save in a gathering of people.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

82.

The Daughter of the Great.

X 339 563 In many villages there live, besides the fellāḥs, Arabs who have become settled. Inspite of the fact that they are, for the most part, not to be distinguished from the fellāḥs in their mode of living and often not even in their dress, yet the Arabs are very proud of their extraction. They are [516] pleased to be addressed thus: Ja šēḫ el-ʿarab = "Shēkh of the Arabs".

Bint el-akabir mālya ʾulletha.
taḥt es-selālim šaḫšaḫit libbetha.
šāwirtê ʿa'li bil-ḥuṣān amsikha.
ʿamalit amīre, bintê šēḫ el-ʿorbān.

The daughter of the great filled her water-bottle;
[301] Under the stairway her necklace jingled.
I wanted to take her on my horse
But she held herself proudly, as a woman of rank and daughter of the Shēkh of the Arabs.

[342] [312] 2. The stairway ascends on the outside of the house, and beneath it, in its shade, stands the large water-jar (zīr), in which the day's provision of water is kept.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

83.

The Language of the Wise.

Aššaret bi-ʿēnēha, fihimt suālīhe; 539x
we-kull el-labībin bil-ašāre yifhamu. 832
[201]

She made signs with her eyes and I understood
her question;
All wise people understand by signs.

84.

Rose, Look Out!

A young peasant is at work in his field, near a house, in which lives a girl, to whom he would make advances.

Ya warde ṭilli
min ṛēṭ el-fellāḥ!
Ṭallet-li min fō'
bil-ḥala' weṭ-ṭō',
lamma ṛamāni eš-šō'.
Fi-ʿarḍik ṭilli.

O Rose look out
Upon the peasant's field!
Then she looked down from above,
With earrings and neck-ring (adorned), [301]
Till longing seized me.
"Have pity, look out!"

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

85.

In Love.

×534

One day, à propos of this song, it occurred to a wag amongst our men, to improvise verses, and these improvisations were sung throughout that entire afternoon and, indeed, to the Egyptian national hymn. This hymn is a very curious, musical production, which, I am told, was composed after the oriental style, by a European.

[186] [533]

Ṭali'a min bēt abūha
rēḥe ḥōš eg-gimal,
'ēnha-l-ḥabībha terā'i
wil-maḥrame fidha-š-šimāl.

As she comes out of her father's house
And goes toward the camel-yard,
Her eye looks after her beloved,
And her handkerchief is in her left hand.

[293] 2. The place enclosed by a cactus-hedge or otherwise, in which the camels pasture. It lies outside the village proper.

[832] [293] [531] 4. The women are fond of coquetting with little embroidered handkerchiefs. Compare a song in Dalman, p. 25 (from Jerusalem), which begins thus: "I see Mish'al sitting by the mill, in Mish'al's hand an embroidered handkerchief."

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

86.

A Mighty Helper.

539 x
832
[778]

Compare the very similar little song from Cairo, in Lane II p. 81 (hence, of the year 1836)[1]. "He of Embābe" is Shēkh Isma'īn, whose tomb lies in Embābe, near Cairo. In Lane's song the appeal is made to Shēkh Aḥmed of Ṭanṭa (compare No. 8).

Ya-mbābi, yalla, ya-mbābi,
tigma'ni 'ala 'izz aḥbābi!
Win gāni ḥabībi-l-lēle,
la'mil-lo el-kašmīr ḍullēle,
wa'ul-lo: salamāt, ya ḥabībi,
'izz el-layāli el-lēle.

Thou of Embābe, up, thou of Embābe,
Unite me with my best beloved!
And if my beloved comes to me to night,
I will make for her a baldachin of the cashmere shawl,
And say to her: Welcome, my beloved,
This night is the fairest of nights!

4. The couch shall be decked with costly stuffs.

---

[1]) The preceding song in Lane (II p. 81) I also once heard sung, but unfortunately failed to write it down:

Everyone whose eyes are sleeping
Need not think the lover sleeps.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

87.

Long Since Decided.

539
582

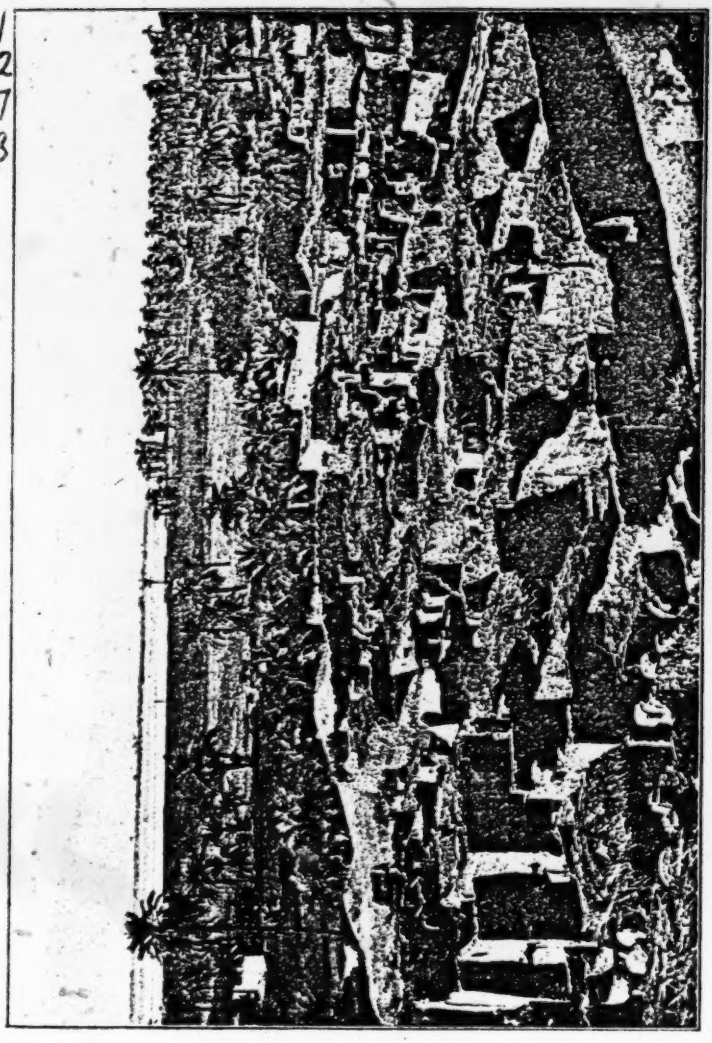
Ṭiliḥtᵉ fō' cs-suṭāḥ
baški-l-hawa lalla.
Le'ēt telāte beyi'ru fi-kalām Alla.
'alû-li: taḫdi-bnᵉ 'ammik?
'ultᵉ: la, walla!
'alû-li: taḫdi-bnᵉ ḫalik?
'ultᵉ: šar' Alla!
'alû-li: taḫdi-l-ɣarīb?
ḫafattᵉ: bismalla!

I mounted to the roof
And unburdened my love to Allah.
There I found three, who were reading in God's Word.
They said to me: Wilt thou take thy cousin on thy father's side?
I said: No, by Allah!
They said to me: Wilt thou take thy cousin on thy mother's side?
I said: No, by Allah's law!
They said to me: Wilt thou take the stranger?
Then I said to myself: In Allah's name!

1. During the cooler hours of the afternoon and evening, the roofs are much frequented.
3. Three old men.
4. Marriage between relatives is regarded as most natural. Compare No. 96, note on l. 1.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

361
342
137
133



The Village of Edfu in Upper Egypt.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

88.

Hope Deferred ....

539x 832

The lover awaits impatiently an opportunity to join his sweetheart. He compares himself with a ship, which, although ready to set out, is obliged to lie waiting at anchor. "I have waited for two years, and now I give up hope. Therefore let us depart!" — The song was usually combined with No. 131.

El-lēl, el-lēl, ya ḫilli!
Ya ma ṭal el-lēl ʿala ḫilli!
El-ḫill ya mā-hu ʾāsi!
u-širibt el-kās, ya nāsi,
sanatēn wana ʿal-barr rāsi.
niḥdir u-ngurr el-merāsi!

The night, the night, my loved one!
O, how long the night was for me because of my loved one!
O, how hard is the loved one!
I have drunk the cup (of sorrow) ye people,
For two years whilst I lay at anchor by the shore.
Now we are ready, let us weigh anchor!

4. The explanation: "cup of sorrow" is Maḥmūds.
5. Two years, an expression for a long time, is used also in No. 130, l. 3.

[195]

[P. 94 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

89.

The Wind, the Rogue.

*539
821
[114]

Tantavy, in Traité de la langue arabe vulgaire, p. 222 (hence of the year 1848) has this same little song in a slightly varying form. According to that version we have inserted 'āni in our last line, in order to rhyme with gāni, instead of ḫāli as Maḥmūd gave it.

Ḥabaṭ el-hawa fil-bāb,
'ult el-ḥelēwe gāni.
Atarīk, ya hawa, kaddāb,
beyiḍḥak 'ala-l-'alb el-'āni.

The wind knocked at the door,
And I said: "My little sweetheart has come to me."
Therefore art thou a rogue, O wind,
Who laughs at a grieving heart.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Sick with Longing.

90.

539x
832

Ya ma inte waḥišni,
ya gamīl, we-rūḥi fīk!
Ya me'anis 'albi, le-mīn aškīk?
aškīk lilli 'adir, 'adir yiḥāfik
we-yballiṛ eṣ-ṣabir amalo.
Ana ḥali le-bu'dak lam yirḍīk.

Oh, how lonely thou makest me,
Lovely one, while my spirit is with thee!
O companion of my heart, to whom shall I complain of thee?
I will complain of thee to the Mighty One, — [782]
mighty to guide thee
And make the patient one attain (the goal of) his hope.
It will not please thee (when thou seest) what is my state because of thine absence.

4. Of course God; compare No. 87, l. 2. He, alone, has power, so to guide the girl, that she may finally listen to her lover. [776]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

91.

×539 832 Those women are addressed, who torment a lover with hard-heartedness.

'Atīl el-muḥabbe lē tuhgurû?
Mutaiyim u-murram, ma tirḥamû!
Ṭaḥantu fo'ado bi-siḥr il-'iyūn.
Kaffâ ma garâ-lo, ta'alu u-nzurû!

Why do ye forsake him, him slain of love?
A slave to love and filled with passion — have pity on him!
Ye have crushed his heart by the magic of your eyes.
That which has befallen him is enough. Come and look upon him!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

92.

The Sweetheart as a Physician for Love-Sickness.

539x

Magrūḥ u-kulli guraḥatī,
ḥaiye hatū-li ṭabībi!
Magrūḥ bi-sinn il-lawāḥiz,
ya rabb, ḥallī-li ḥabībi.

I am wounded, full of wounds,
Up! Bring me my physician!
I have been wounded by a lance of eyes;
O Lord, grant me my beloved!

3. Literally: by the point or sharpness of the glances. The beaming eyes of the beauty pierce like arrows or lances (Vollers). [826]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

The Charmer.

93.

Ya bēḍa, koḥlik sabāni
u-ʿala-l-ḥabāib u-ramāni.
libiset ʿuṣēbe wimradde,
witmaiyilet ʿal-muḥadde.
sabbalit ʿiyūn el-muḥabbe,
ma laḥeʾtiš alaggam ḥoṣāni.

O maiden white, thine eye-paint hath taken me prisoner
And cast me with those who love (thee).
She wore a fillet and a gay-colored bodice,
And leaned upon the cushion.
She drooped her alluring eyes, —
Then I had no time to curb my steed.

1. We would say: Thy beautifully painted eyes have fettered me.

2. Compare with this strange construction in the Arabic, No. 5, l. 2.

3. The ʿuṣēbe is a little scarf, which is wound about the head like a fillet. The meradde is the gay-colored front of a vest-like garment.

5. She sends him an alluring, languishing glance from her half-closed eyes.

94.

539x
832

Ya bēḍa, koḥlik sabāni
ʿala-l-ḥabāib u-ramāni.
El-bēḍa libiset dabūli
weš-šaṭeḥ wel-ʿoʾd el-lūli.
ʿala mir-rāḥ u-gābû-li
waštaḥ-bo nuṣṣ el-layāli.

O maiden white, thine eye-paint hath taken me prisoner
And cast me with those who love thee.
The white one wore silk,
And the shāṭeḥ and the necklace of pearls. [301]
Who will go and bring her to me? —
That I may recline with her at midnight!

1. Compare No. 93, l. 1.

4. Shāṭeḥ is a head-dress of gold or silver coins sewed in a row on the border of a piece of cloth, so that they lie on the forehead from temple to temple. (Almkvist, Kleine Beitraege p. 854.) Other kinds of head-dress however, are known by this name. (Lane II, p. 356.) [291]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

95.

X537
532

A Message of Love.

Il-le'akum ḥabībi,
sallamū-li ʿalê,
u-msikû-li ṭarfê šālo,
weʿzimû-li ʿalê.
Win ma-rḍīš bil-ʿozūme,
Alla yehauwan ʿalê.

If my lover meets you,
Greet him me
And hold him by the corner of his shawl
And invite him to come to me.
But, if he cares not to accept the invitation,
May Allah forgive him for it!

6. For love of him I forgive him his refusal!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

96.

An Elixir.

"If thou hadst thy happiness to buy at the cost of people's respect, the treasures revealed would carry thee through it all."

Ḥaiya, yabnê 'ammi,
wiš-balāk bil-ṭarām?
Lō šuft nchūdi,
rummān 'ala 'ūdi,
la-tmūt yahūdi
wa-la 'alēkšê malām.
Lō šuft el-ḥala'
fuidni bara',
la-tšīl bil-ṭala'
wa-la 'alēkšê malām.

Up, cousin!
Why art thou so cast down with grief?
If thou couldst see my breasts,
Like pomegranates on my body,
Thou mightest die like a Jew,
Without being open to blame!

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

×539 [301]

If thou couldst see the rings,
As they sparkle in my ear,
Thou mightest carry the basket,
Without being open to blame!

[582] [605] 1. As marriage between cousins is regarded as the most natural thing (compare No. 87), hence ibnê 'ammi = "cousin" (masc.) and bintê 'ammi = "cousin" (fem.) are quite common expressions for "dearest". Married couples often speak thus of one another, even though they may not be related.

4. Compare No. 110, l. 6.

[186] 5. The Jews are the most despised of all unbelievers and even more hated than the Christians.

7. They are not plainly visible until the veil is removed.

[461] [857] [631] 9. "Thou mightest carry the basket", namely: of debris from the excavations, which work belongs to the boys. At our work, it was always fun for the boys, when one of the men, as a punishment, was obliged to take a basket and carry debris in it. Then scornful and contemptuous remarks were rained upon him.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

97.

Good Friends.

539x 406

Sāqye (sā'ye) is the name of the contrivance driven by oxen, for raising the water of the river or a well, to the fields. By means of a large, horizontal, wooden cog-wheel and a smaller, perpendicular one, a large wheel is turned round, which revolves on the same axle with the smaller cog-wheel. On this second, large wheel, hangs a long, endless chain of jars, which raise the water from below and pour it into a trench above. (Compare the illustration.) The peculiar groan and creak of the sāqyes belong as much to the landscape of the Nile Valley, as do the melancholy songs of the shādûf-workers. [231] [312]

A youth comes to the sāqye and questions it as to whether the girls of the village have already been there to get water, as they do every morning. The old sāqye understands him and replies: "A pretty girl has been here" and tells how even the ox, inspired, declared: "For such pretty girls as this, I will work forever; as for the old women, let me alone!" To this day I can hear the bantering tone of the, "Dog's son of a steer!" which escaped one boy as another repeated to me this favorite song. 883 539x [312] [462]

Ya sā'ye, yammû ṭāra,
waradet ʿalēki-l-ʿadāra?
Waradet ʿalēye ummû mandîl
wil-kaʿb zēi el-ḥiyāre.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

×539
883

5 *Wet-tōr ʾal: Dauwarāni,*
amla li-sūd el-ʿiyāni.
Win gat el-ʿagūz, baṭṭalāni,
taḥram ʿalēye-d-doāra.

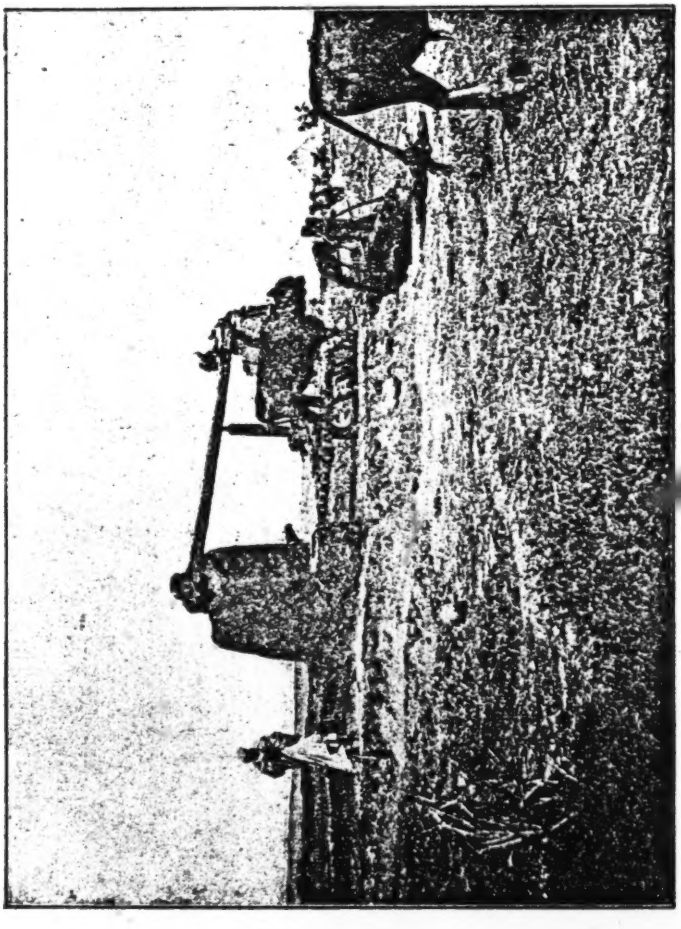
"O sāqye with the huge wheel
Have the girls come down here to thee?"
[824] "One with a head-kerchief has come down to me,
[826] Whose heel is like a cucumber."
5 And the ox said: "Drive me around,
That I may fill for the 'black-eyed'.
If, however, the old one comes, then let me halt,
For then the turning is forbidden me."

4. The comparison of the sweetheart's heels with the tenderness of a cucumber, is a delightfully characteristic notion of the Egyptian peasant. Maḥmûd understood ka'b as "heel", but I should not fail to mention the opinion of Arabists, that a very similarly sounding word (ku'b), meaning "breast", is to be read here.

6. Namely: Fill the trench for the black-eyed girls, who come to draw water.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

231
406
291



Photograph by L. Borchardt.

A Sāqye Near the Great Pyramids.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

98.

Unnecessary Anxiety. 539x

Dāir tedauwar ʿalēye, ya ḫāli, lē?
Ana we-ḥabībi fil-ʾaʿa,
nuʿud saʿa.
Winte zaʿlan lē?

Why dost thou run about looking for me, uncle?
I and my beloved are in the parlor
And shall sit there a while.
Hence why then art thou annoyed?

2. ʾAʿa is the name of the largest room in the harem, which lies in the upper story. For illustration see Lane I Page 18. [342]

[P. 108 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

To the End of the World!

99.

×539 [551] Shamme is a girl's name.

Ya Šamme, ḥāli, ya Šamme,
ya-msauwaḥani, ya Šamme,
ya-mgauwi'āni, ya Šamme,
ya-m'aṭṭašani, ya Šamme,
ḥāli, ya Šamme!
Larūḥ eš-šām 'ala šān Šamme!

O Shamme, what has become of me, Shamme,
Whom thou lettest restlessly wander about, Shamme,
Whom thou lettest hunger, Shamme,
Whom thou lettest thirst, Shamme,
What has become of me, Shamme!
Verily, I would go to Syria for the sake of Shamme!

[804] 6. I would go to the end of the world for her sake! Syria is often used for a long distance. Compare No. 100.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

100. 539x

Ya bint, ya bēḍe,
ʾatalni hawāki.
terāḥi-š-šām
wana bardi waraki.

O maiden, O white one,
Love for thee hath slain me.
If thou shouldst go to Syria,
I would follow thee!

3. Regarding "Syria" see No. 99, l. 6.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

101.

Near the Goal.

×539

Ḥaiya, yabnê ʿammi,
ḥaiya, ya dalîl!
Win gâni ibnê ʿammi,
lašāwar bi-kummi
wa'ul: yabnê ʿammi,
faragallâh ʾarīb.

Up, cousin,
Up, [my] beloved!
And when my cousin comes to me,
I will signal to him with my sleeve,
And say: Dear cousin,
The joy of Allah is near!

1. Regarding "cousin", see Nos. 87; 96.
2. Maḥmûd explained dalîl as ḥaṭîb muḫbir.
4. The sleeves are full and hang down over the hands.
6. The joy which Allah sends, namely: our union.

[291]
[581]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

A Contrast.

102. (The Beloved.) 539×

Fāyit ʿala darbina
kumm el-yalak wardi,
ʾalu: ḥabībak ḍaʿīf!
ʾultē: inʾilû ʿandi!
muḥaddito rīš naʿāme
u-masnado ʾalbi.
we-limmu ḥamām el-balad
wes-samnē min ʿandi!

As I was walking in our street,
The jacket-sleeve rose-colored,
They said; "Thy beloved is ill."
I said: "Carry him to me!
His pillow shall be of ostrich feathers, [237]
His support, my heart!
Gather the doves of the village, —
I will give the fat (for the roasting)."

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

×539

103. (The Enemy.)

Fāyit ʿala darbina
kumm el-ǧalak ginzār,
ʾālu: ʿadūak ḍaʿīf
ʾultē: iḥdifū fin-nār!
limmu kilāb el-balad
wes-simmē bil-ʾanṭār!

As I was walking in our street,
The jacket-sleeve rust-colored,
They said: "Thy enemy is ill."
I said: "Pitch him in the fire!
Gather the dogs of the village,
And (put) poison (on the roast) by the hundred-weight."

2. Maḥmûd said: ginzāri.

6. Comparison with the corresponding lines of No. 102 shows, that there is reference here also to a roast.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Another Contrast.

539×
574
554

104. (The Well-to-do.)

Win gani abu ṭarbūš,
la'ul-lo: ya marḥabe!
we-afriš-lo is-serīr
wa'allī-lo-l-martabe
wazemzem-lo-l-fingal
wa'ul-lo: itfaḍḍal gabe!

If someone with a ṭarbūsh comes to me,
I will say to him: "Welcome!"
And make the bed ready for him,
And make the mattress high,
And offer him the (coffee-) cup, [272]
And say to him: "Please thee, without payment!"

1. The ṭarbūsh is the head-covering of officials and well-to-do citizens (see No. 24). [292]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

105. (The Poor.)

x539
554
574

Win gāni abu libde,
la'ul-lo: rūḥ, kide,
ya 'alīl ez-zō', ya ḫēb er-raga!
rūḥ taḥt el-behāim
we-šīl waḥlāt iš-šite!

But if someone with a felt cap comes to me
I will say to him: "Get out of the way; so!
Thou unpolished, miserable fellow!
Go among the cattle
And cart off the winter's dung!"

[291] 1. The felt cap is the head-covering of the poor peasants (see No. 56).
2. So! accompanied by a motion of the hand.
3. Miserable, literally: disappointed in his hopes.

8:Schaefer A-8 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

106.

"Love . . . is not Provoked."

539x

Jealous women attempt to blacken a lover in the eyes 152 of his sweetheart.

En-nās ʾalû-li: ḥabībik kwoiyis —
ʾultĕ: ai, ma-lo?
ʾalu-mḥanni yemīno —
ʾultĕ: wi-šmālo!
ʾalu: beyiʾlaʿ u-yilbis —
ʾultĕ: mim-mālo!
ʾalu: beyākul melabbis —
ʾultĕ: hanīyâ-lo!
ʾalu: da fî er-radīye —
ʾultĕ: mīn ṭālo?
Rūḥu, ya ʿawāzil,
u-baṭṭalu di-l-ʾōl!
illa maʿâ laḥz,
yirmi kullĕ min ṭalo!

People said to me: Thy lover is handsome —
I said: Yes, what is the matter with him?
They said: He colors his right hand with henna — [302]
I said: His left also!
They said: He makes many changes in his dress —

539
152

I said: With his own money!
They said: He eats sweets —
I said: May they agree with him!
They said: He is ill-natured —
I said: Who has laid hold of him?
Be gone, you jealous creatures,
And cease your talk!
Unless you do, you will learn that his glance
Vanquishes everyone who lays hold of him!

3. He is an effeminate fop! The dyeing of certain portions of the hands and feet, with the leaves of the henna shrub (Lawsonia inermis), customary among the women and children, is considered, when practiced by men, a sign of effeminacy.

302
157

5. He is a dandy.

7. He has a sweet-tooth.

10. That is to say: Who provoked him? He must have had cause for being unpleasant. Mahmûd interpreted this line as: "min fikum misik fi" that is to say, "Which of you has laid hold of him."

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

107.

Persuasion.

The girl comes to her lover, named Abu Mūsa, who is busy at the sāqye (compare No. 97), to fetch him from his work. "Thou wilt find work at home to do, and there thou wilt be near me, and there will be time, too, for something else beside work." 539x 832

Yabu Mūsa, ḥill et-tōr!
Walla, māna ḥāllo,
lamma maiyil ḍillo.
Ḍillo maiyīt u-raḥ,
wa-la ba'āš illa-l-mirwāḥ,
ṣaffē banāni, ṣaff ilwāḥ,
ṣaff il-ḥōḥ 'ala-t-tiffāḥ!
Ta'āle, ya ḥabībi, wišwešni;
aḥsan rāḥ terḥ we-tūḥašni.

"Abu Mūsa, untie the bull!"
"By Allah! I will not untie him
Until his shadow has grown long." [805]
"But his shadow has already grown long and gone away,
And there is nothing left to do but to go

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

And pile up the dove-jars and boards,
And pack the peaches and the apples!
Come, my beloved and caress me,
Else thou wilt stay out and leave me alone."

1. The bull which turns the sāqye. (Compare No. 97.)

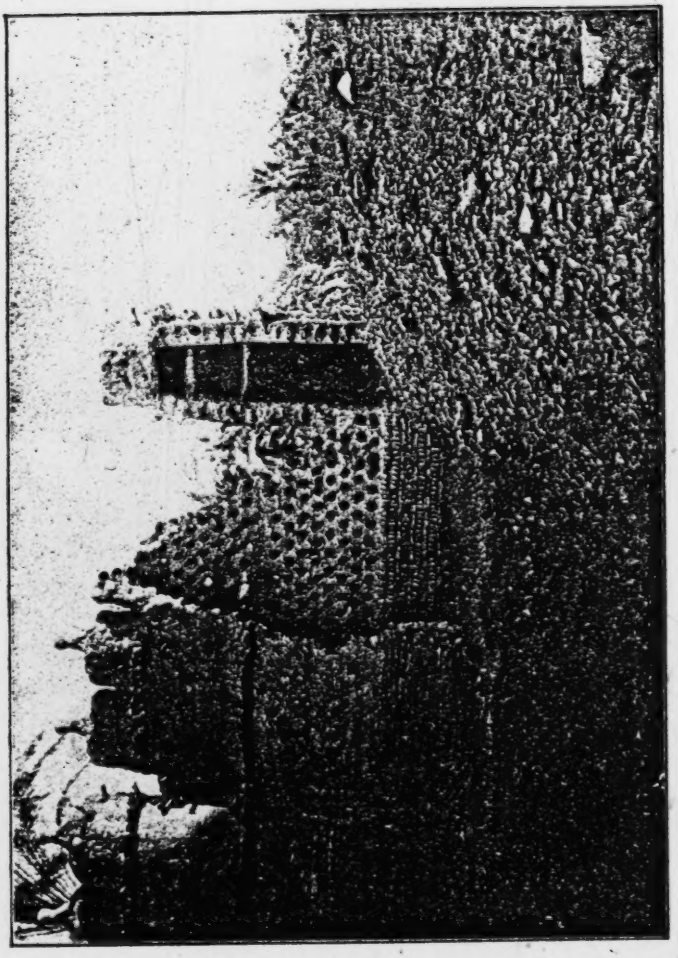
6. The walls of the dove-houses are built of Nile mud and earthen jars, so ranged on each other, that the openings are toward the inside and the bottoms toward the outside. These jars furnish the holes for the nests. The bottoms of some of the jars are knocked out, in order to make entrance-holes. Boards and the ribs of palm-branches, form perches on the inside, while for the outside, branches of trees are usually stuck into the wall.

The illustration shows a half-demolished dove-house, the construction of which is thus made very clear.

These fortress-like dove-houses are to be found especially in Middle Egypt.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

235
343



A Ruined Dove-House.
Ehnasye in Middle Egypt.

Photograph by L. Borchardt.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

108.

At the Garden-Door.

539×
832

The friend of a youth advises him as to how he may approach a certain rich and beautiful girl (1—6). The youth himself is also rich (ll. 9—10). The girl is from the maṛrib ("the west", that is to say, the coast-land of North Africa other than Egypt), where the women are noted for their beauty, as are the men for their sagacity. Ll. 7—13 contain narration by the girl. The song was a favorite of our workmen and often sung.

[186]

ʿAla bāb il-genēne
windah: Ya gamāl!
Tiṭlaʿ-lak ṣabīye
bēḍa maṛrabīye
bir-raʾabe-ṭ-ṭarīye
wil-lūli ṛarʾān.

Ḍarab el-bāb bi-īdo,
sammaḥni ʾaṣīdo,
ʿašara min ʿabīdo
tuḍrub bir-ruṭān.
Daḫalna el-genēne,
beʿna wištarēne
we-ḥammalna eg-gimāl.

[p. 122 is blank]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

×539. At the garden-door
822 Call: "O Beauty!"
Then a maiden will come out to thee,
A fair one, from the marrib,
With the soft neck,
On which the (heavy) pearls lie sunken.

He struck the door with his hand,
And let me hear his song.
Ten of his black slaves
Gabbled together.
We entered the garden,
[195] Sold and bought
And loaded the camels.

12. 13 are an euphemism.

109.

Progress.

539 x

The gallābîye is a cotton, shirt-like garment, reaching to the feet or a little above. It is mostly worn gathered up by means of a belt. It is worn by both men and women. [291]

Ah yāna wez-zemān hannāni,
yabu gallābîye, wez-zemān hannāni.
Ruḥt lil-faṣṣāl yefaṣṣalha-li,
ruḥt lil-ḫaiyaṭ yeḫaiyaṭha-li,
ruḥt labāye yelabbisha-li
we-ruḥt lil-ʿarīs yeʾallahha-li.

Oh, how good time has been to me,
I, with the gallābîye, time has been good to me!
I went to the cutter to have him cut it for me, [294]
I went to the tailor to have him sew it for me,
I went to my father, to have him put it on me,
And I went to my bridegroom, to have him pull it off me. [585]

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Sweet Medicine.

110.

x 539

Yammâ tôb ṣâfi we-šbōka welwān
weš-šiffa-l-ḥamra lam tirzil kittan
wil-ʿēn es-sōda lam tiḥmil duḫḫan.

Yammâ tôb ṣâfi, ya šarak el-hawa,
u-šaʿrik laṣfar yiʿab-bo-l-hawa,
u-ṣiḥnî nhādik waṣafû-li dawa.

[291] O thou, with the light outer garment and the hair-net and the gay clothes,
And the red lip, which has not had to spin flax,
And the black eye, which has not had to endure smoke.

O thou with the light outer garment, thou catch-net of love!
The wind plays with thy yellow hair,
And the plate of thy breasts has been prescribed as medicine for me.

1. Under the black, transparent, outer garment, the women wear a gay — usually red or yellow — dress of calico or finer material. Maḥmûd wished elwān = "the colors", understood as applying to this garment.

2. In spinning, the thread is often moistened with the lip. 539x
3. To stand at the hearth in a peasant-hut, where the only outlet for the smoke is the door — there is rarely a window — certainly does not promote the beauty of the eyes. [286] [354]
5. It never struck me heretofore, that blond or red hair was considered by the peasant to be especially beautiful; for instead of yellow, someone else said: laḥmar = "red". [826]
6. The body is represented as a plate, on which lie the breasts, the "pomegranates" (Maḥmûd). [826]

Wild Nights.

539x
832

111.

Yasmar, ya lābis 'agātak,
*Ya mišša*ḥ*la' min dān aḫwātak,*
nuṣṣ el-lēl nisma' ḥarakātak,
šēi ginān wil-lēl ma banām!

O brown one with the ivory bracelets,
Who art more graceful than all thy sisters,
Half the night we will listen to thy prattle,
A mad affair, and at night I will not sleep!

2. Išša*ḥ*la' refers to the coquettish movements in dancing and walking, which, according to our feeling, are not always refined. Compare 112, 1. The Arabic expressions for "graceful" and "prattle", here used, are not so innocent. [535]

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112.

Gāi min beʿīd yitmaḫṭar,
wil-lāli ʿala ṣudro itbaḫtar.
Hāt el-mudām, ya ḫilli, u-nuskar,
šēi ginān wil-lēl ma banām.

She comes, in the distance, with swaying gait,
And the pearls are scattered o'er her breast.
Bring forth the wine, my dearest, we will drink ourselves drunk,
A mad affair, and at night I will not sleep.

1. See Note on l. 2, No. 111.

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Invitations.

113.

The girl makes pretense of showing her lover one of the sand-banks which emerge from the Nile, suffer many changes and disappear, according to the season of the year. Here, of course, it is only a cloak (Maḥmûd).

Yā ṭara, ya ḥabībi,
kuntē fīn el-yōm?
šaʿrak mesabsab,
we-ʿēnak sable lin-nōm.
Iṭlaʿ bina ʾaṣr ʿali,
ninām we-nišbaʿ nōm.
wafarragak ʿala-l-gezīre,
illi-tnašet el-yōm.

Where, my beloved,
Hast thou been today?
Thy hair hangs on thy brow
And thine eye is heavy with sleep.
Let us mount a lofty house
And sleep till we are sated with sleep.
And I will show thee the island
Which has formed itself today.

2. Literally: hangs straight down.

3. ʾaṣr, literally: castle, designates a solidly built structure with an upper story. Even a house such as the middle class in the cities possess, is, in the country beside the miserable peasant-huts, designated as ʾaṣr, "castle" (Vollers).

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114.

×539 832 Two people conversing. Ll. 1—2 are the words of the man; ll. 3—5 are spoken by the woman.

Ya'bu-l-libās el-'aṭīfe
we-dikketo halahalla!
Gibt en-nabāil, ya sīdi,
wed-da" laḥḍar 'ala īdi!
Ya Moslimīn waḥḥadu Alla!

"Thou with the velvet trowsers
The lacings of which are so fine!"
"I have put on the bracelets, sir,
And the green tatooing is on my hand!
Ye Moslems, testify to the oneness of Allah!"

4. Regarding the tatooing of the hands compare the remark on No. 64. l. 3.

5. The Egyptian sees nothing improper in combining pious expressions with most questionable matters.

115.

Ta'ālâ-li, ya wād, ta'ālâ-li,
taḥtĕ sngaret yūḥ, ya ṛazāli!

Come to me, my lad, O, come to me
Under the tree of delight, O my gazelle!

2. For "delight", the Arabic has a characteristic exclamation of pleasure (yûḥ!).

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Upper Egypt

116.

Christian and Moslem.

A Mohammedan woman has thrown herself away on a Coptic goldsmith. The word nuṣrāni, Christian, always has an odious sound to the Moslem; for this reason the woman thinks she has claim to valuable gifts from her lover.

Ramāni-l-ɣarām, ramāni
taḥtĕ šibbāk en-nuṣrāni.
Ma ʾultĕ-lak, ya-mʿallim Mūse?
Duʾ lil-kirdān ʿarūse!
Muslime we-ʿāšiʾet nuṣrāni!

Love has smitten me, smitten me
Under the Christian's window.
Did I not tell thee, Master Mūsa?
"Fasten a pendant to my necklace!"
I, a Moslem, in love with a Christian!

3. Have I not had to ask you once before for the ornament? Meʿallim, master, literally: teacher, is a title given to all Copts, with the exception of the poorest classes.

4. ʿarūse is an ornament, which hangs zĕ nlĕân = like an order, on the necklace.

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Upper Egypt

117.

Light Minded.

×539

Ummāli ē? ummāli ē?
āḫod el-fellāḥ: aʿmil-bo ē?
āḫod el-gindi
abu šāl hindi.
Hūwa yeṛanni
wanarudd ʿalê.

Of course, what else? Of course, what else?
If I take the peasant, what shall I do with him?
I will take the soldier
With the Indian shawl.
He shall sing
And I shall answer him.

118.

Dost Thou Think of Me?

Yasmar, yabu ʿēn ʿasalīye,
garḥê hawāk itmakkan fiye.
Yasmar, yabu-l-libās eṣ-ṣīni,
ana ʿala bālak wala-nte nāsīni.

Thou brown one, with the honey-brown eyes,
The wound of thy love is fast fixed in me.
[291] Thou brown one with the dainty drawers,
Dost thou remember me, or hast thou forgotten me?

[263] 1. Egyptian honey is much darker than ours.
[177] 2. Literally: "Chinese under drawers". Chinese is used here as Indian is in Nos. 56 and 117.

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Upper Egypt

119.

The Door and the Lover.

539x
832
342

Ya bāb, ʾul-li ʿala auwil meṣāḥibetak,
ya bāb, ʾalbi inšabak miʿ ḥubbē ṣāḥibetak,
ya bāb, ana kuntē gāi-lak maʿ ṣiyāḥ ed-dīk,
ya bāb, ana kuntē nāwi aḥlaʿak warmīk,
ya bāb, ana kuntē nāwi aḥlaʿak, sibtak.
Ma ʾal-li-l-bāb: Ḥalli el-ʿaʾl sākin fīk,
wiš yiʿmil el-bāb, lamma ṣāḥbo gāfik?
Ma ultē: Ya bāb, gāk ḥafsē bi-muftāḥak,
ʿiyūn ḥabībi terāi min bēn ilwāḥak.
Ma ʾal-li-l-bāb: Wana mā-li taʿtibni,
wiš yiʿmil el-bāb, lamma ṣāḥibo zāḥak?
Ma ʾultē: Ya bāb, dana ḍaiyahtē ʿalē māli,
u-lē ma ʾābilt el-gamīl badri u-hu-māli,
ʾul-lo, ḥalli yūfi il-miʿād!
Illi ʿalē siʿān ṣauwamni ʿan akl ez-zād.
ʾasamēn u-billāh, we-ṣōm el-ʿām yilzamni,
in ma-ḥtaḍā-li-b-uaṣlo lasakkano il-alḥād!

"O door, tell me for thy former friendship's sake!
O door, my heart is entangled in love for thy mistress.
O door, I was on the way to thee before the cock crowed. [805] [825]
O door, I intended to lift thee from the hinges and throw thee on the ground.
O door, I intended to lift thee from the hinges, but I have left thee."
What the door said to me: "Let reason dwell in thee!

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What shall a door do, if its mistress treat thee coldly?"
What I said: "O door, mayest thou sink, together with thy key,
The eyes of my beloved are looking between thy boards."
What the door said: "Wherefore dost thou reproach me?
What shall a door do, if its mistress does not want thee?"
What I said: "O door, it is I who have spent all my money for her;
And why have I not met the lovely one, when she went to draw water?
Tell her, to come to the meeting-place at the right time!
She, with the beautiful hips, is to blame that I hunger and eat no bread.
In truth and by Allah, and may a year of fast be laid on me,
If she does not grant me union with her, I will give her lodging in the grave!"

13. Compare the remark on No. 77.

15. In the original it is more realistic, namely: thigh. From love-sickness I do not think of eating.

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120.

Ye Stars of the Night!

539x
821
[537]
[773]

'Alye is the ladylove of the noted hero of romance, Abu Zēd, whose life forms a favorite theme for public recitations. He belonged to the tribe of the Beni Hilāl.

Ya nugūm el-lēl, šūfu mā garā-li!
Mā yenām il-lēl illa abu 'albĕ ḫali.
Ya ma baket 'Alye 'al-Abu Zēd el-Hilāli!

Ye stars of the night, see what has happened to me!
At night he only, sleeps, whose heart is free.
How hath 'Alye wept for Abu Zēd el-Hilali!

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Upper Egypt

121.

Jealousy.

*539
152

Ya abyaḍ el-bēḍ, ʾul-li wiš garaḥ ḫaddak,
garḥ es-sikkīn wala munyati ʿaḍḍak?
Sāyi ʿalēk en-nabi, we-sāyi ʿalēk rabbak
ma tiḥša ʿetnēn, wa-ḫyati ʿala ʾalbak.

Thou fairest of the fair, what has wounded thy cheek?
Is it a stab from a knife or has my desire bitten thee?
— — I adjure thee by the Prophet and I adjure thee by thy Lord,
That thou love not two at once, for my life hangs on thy heart.

2. He does not speak out the suspicion which leads to the following.

4. The conclusion probably means: My life hangs upon thy faithfulness.

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122.

Capricious Love.

539x
832

Yabiaḍ, ya ḥilu-l-'awām,
yalli 'ala ṣudrak rummān,
kām aṣlaḥak winte raḍbān!
Ṭalet 'alēna-l-layāli!

Thou white one with the sweet form,
Thou, on whose breast pomegranates lie,
How many, "Allah restore thee", it costs me when thou art angry!
The nights have been too long for us!

3. Aṣlaḥak Allâ (May Allah restore thee) is a much used, [782] ejaculatory prayer.
4. During which we have been far from each other.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

123.

Unfaithfulness.

×539 622 661 Šēḫ el-balad is the mayor or head of the village. This office still exists, although much of its power has been transferred to the ʿomde, another of the magistrates of the village.

Minni lē, minni lē,
ya-bnaiye? u-rdēti lē?
Šēḫ baladi wanaʾul-lo ē?
iddāni iš-šabbē, ṭaḥant ʿalē!

"Why dost thou shun me, why dost thou shun me,
My little maid? And why hast thou dealt so ill?"
"He is the shēkh of my village, and what can I say to him?
[231] He loaned me the buffalo-calf and I have ground with it!"

3. How could I, a poor girl, refuse the great man?
4. "Moreover, I was under obligations to him." The mills are often turned by buffaloes.

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Upper Egypt

124.

Forsaken.

Habīb 'albi hatû-li, ya nās, 539x
šarad minni u-fido-l-kās.

Bring me, O people, the beloved of my heart!
He left me while the cup was yet in his hand.

2. In the midst of our happiness together.

125.

Reason for Complaint.

This little song was usually combined with No. 74.

Ya mā tclauwum, ya ḫali,
'ala-n-nās el-mabāli!
Salla-l-'iše wa-la yani.

How thou dost reproach, uncle,
The unhappy ones!
Evening prayers are over and he has not come to me.

2. Of course it is lovers who are meant. Do not reproach them because they are often cast down and sad.
3. Have I not good reason for sadness?

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126.

Recognized.

x 539 832 A girl wishes to ingratiate herself with a certain well-to-do young man (ll. 1—2). He repels her, saying that she bears the name of her other lover plainly upon her lips.

Massik bil-ḫēr, ya-Muḥammed mela'ini,
rākib kuḥēle u-rāḥ el-kummê sittīnî.
Dā'i'a 'ala šiffetak ḥandar
u-'Osmān Bē! 'Iš' el-banāt ṛandara!
Ya rabb, neggīni.

"Good evening, Mohammed, who meetest me
Riding a noble mare, and trailing the sleeve yards long."
"[O be gone!] Tatooed in green on thy lips is
The name Osman Bê! — — How fickle are girls when in love!
O Lord, save me [from all danger]!"

2. The last words mean literally: trailing the sleeve sixty (yards) long, a great exaggeration.

3. Literally: "Thou hast green color tatooed and the [304] name etc." Regarding tatooing see No. 64. Girls often have the name of a lover tatooed upon themselves. Compare a song from Endor in Galilee, in Dalman's collection, p. 112. "... the hands a work of the Creator and the blue tatooing over them strewn. On her breast she writes Ḥ and M and D." (These letters stand for Ḥ(a)m(a)d, the name of the lover.)

5. This exclamation has no connection with what precedes, [182] as it would seem from the English. It is one of the innumerable, ejaculatory prayers, which Moslems enjoy repeating.

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127.

Disobedient.

539x
521
503

A young wife, against the express command of her husband — very pretty women are kept at home — has gone again at daybreak, to the river, to chat with her former companions, who have come to draw water (see No. 78). Meanwhile sunrise draws nearer and she urges the return home, in order that her husband may not discover her absence.

Ya banāt imlu u-šīlu,
la-n-nahār yiṭla' 'alēye.
Ḫēfe min maḥbūbi yila'ini,
Sīdi u-mḥarrag 'alēye.

O girls, fill and carry away,
That the day may not surprise me.
I fear, that my beloved may meet me.
He is my master and has forbidden me.

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128.

An Inquisitive Questioner.

A539

A man addresses a woman, who is busy preparing doves.

Yalli gōzik fil-Minye,
dabḥa-l-hamām-da-l-mīn?
Dabḥā-l-ḥabībi willi šerīki mīn?

"O thou whose husband is in Minye,
For whom killest thou these doves?"
"I am killing them for my beloved, and whom does it further concern?"

1. "In Minye" is used in the same sense as in the Ṣa'īd", meaning: far away. Compare No. 20, l. 7. Minye is the well-known town in southern Middle Egypt.

[103]

3. Literally: "And who is my partner" (that I should be accountable to him)?

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Upper Egypt

129.

A Matrimonial Tiff.

539x
593

The husband has brought some meat for his wife, but has been much delayed. As an excuse, he tells her of the crowd at the railway station. "Say what you please. I have now neither time nor mind to cook", is the answer which he receives.

Gāb-li-l-laḥme
wel-wabūr zaḥme.
Yabn-el-ʾaḥbe
maṭbuḫšē ana.

He brought me the meat
And at the railway station there was a great crowd.
Thou son of a harlot,
I will not cook!

a. We have a like friendly address in No. 131.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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130.

Remorse.

Yāna, yāna min ṛarāmo, yāne!
Ṣabaḥet ʿēnêye mis-sahar dablāne.
Sanatēn wana taḥtĕ ḍill ḥirāmo.
Ḥāṣimt ummi wabūye ʿala šāno.
Ya mīn yeṣallaḥni dana-l-ṛaḍbāne.

Oh, in what a state, what a state am I, because of my burning love for him!
In the morning my eyes are dull for lack of sleep.
For two years I have been under the shadow of his blanket.
I fell out with my mother and my father for his sake.
Oh, who will comfort me? I am so vexed!

1. What consequences my love has entailed!

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131.

A Friendly Reception.

539× 166 464

At a time when profits were low, a Nile sailor left his ship and went, perhaps to Suez, in search of other work. He then knocked about in the Delta, and after a long absence, returned home, at last, to his wife and children, who, in the meantime had suffered need. The wife receives him with this cutting reproof, the sense of which is: Did I not tell you what the result would be? But what do you care about your family! (ll. 3—8). [593]

We often heard from our workmen, that, in order to secure work, they wander, for instance, from Quft in Upper Egypt, to Suez. This song was usually attached to No. 88 with which it has nothing to do. The connection is probably suggested only because of the picture of the ship used in No. 88.

Ya ma ʾultĕ-lak, ya ma ʾultĕ-lak 593
winte lissa fi-ʾangetak?: 539×
Ya yehūdi, yabn-el-yehudīye, 464
hissak terūḥ eš-šarʾīye,
yaḥdūk bilād el-ɣarbīye,
tiṣbaḥ ʿadīm. id-dirrīye.
Dannak ʿala-l-muʾdāf rāiḥ
teṭallaʿ er-raml es-saiḥ.

Did I not tell thee so, did I not tell thee so?
When thou wast yet on thy ship?
"Thou Jew and son of the Jewess,
Beware of going to the Sharʾīye,

[186]

×539 593 464

5 They will carry thee to the villages of the Ṛarbīye,
And some fine day thou wilt be without thy children.
So stay by thy rowing,
Whilst thou stirrest up the flowing sand."

[501] 2. 'ange is a large sail-boat, almost exactly resembling the better known dahabīye, excepting that it is smaller. Compare Wilkinson, Modern Egypt I p. 209 ff. (cut ibid. p. 195).

3. Compare note on No. 96, l. 5.

[103] 4. 5. eš-šar'īye, namely: the east and el-ṛarbīye: the west, are two provinces of the Delta, of which the capitals are Zaqāzīq (Za'āzī') and Ṭanṭa.

[114] 8. In pushing off, the oars stir up the sand. This is Maḥmûd's explanation, but I have a suspicion that this line has been corrupted. Perhaps a picture has slipped in from the excavations, where the fine, running sand often makes the work a task of the Danaīds.

132.

An Evidence of Favor.

×539 832 [824] A certain working-girl boasts to her companions. The inspector has not given the pretty girl a pomegranate without a purpose. The pomegranate is a sign for love.

El-ḫōli iddāni rummāne
we-ṛamasni be-'ēno en-na'sāne.

The inspector has given me a pomegranate
And has winked at me with his sleepy eye.

[624] 1. Ḫōli is the inspector of an estate of some size.

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133.

A Young Wife and an Old Husband.

539x
593

Tiddūni liš-šāib lē?
Ya-ḫsāret šabābi fī!
Eš-šāib yešabšabni
we-ʿaṣāto telehlebni.
Sāʿat ma-nḫušš el-ʾāʿa,
yibʾa-l-ṛamm meḥauwiṭni.

Why do you give me to the gray-head?
It is a pity to waste my youth on him!
The old man will make me ill,
And his cane will torment me.
When we enter the hall,
Grief will constantly surround me!

3. One must think of superstitious usages which are supposed to incline the young wife's love toward the old man. (Vollers.)

5. The principal room of the house. See No. 98, note [342] on l. 2.

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134.

A Motto.

×539 114 517

When Maḥmûds stock of songs was exhausted, he came once again and dictated to me this song, in praise of the comfortable, dreamy mood, the "kēf", which the Egyptian loves so dearly. He insisted that I should place it as a sort of motto at the beginning of my book; he probably meant before the love-sonnets. (Maḥmûd called a love-song: ṛunet hawa).

Maḥlak, ya kēf,
'and arbab el-ṛarām, maḥlak!
Mašnak, ya kēf,
'and illi ma yidriku ma'nak.

How sweet art thou, O contemplative quiet (kēf),
In the opinion of lovers, how sweet!
How hateful art thou, O contemplative quiet (kēf),
In the opinion of those, who understand not thy meaning!

4. . . . and therefore do not know what to do with thee.

8: Schaefer

MR13 Fellahin
Upper Egypt

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[For information on Fellahin songs, see category 116, pp. 1-148.]

8: Schaefer
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Upper Egypt

[For the native text of Fellahin songs, see category 116, pp. 1-148.]